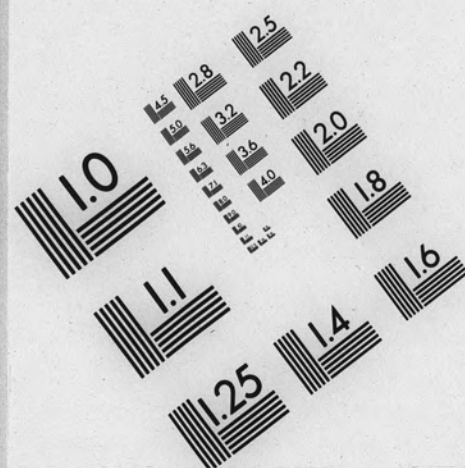


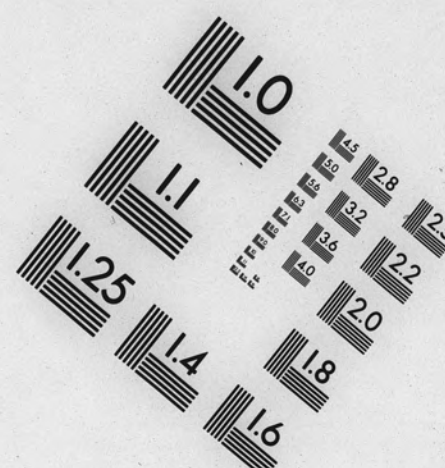
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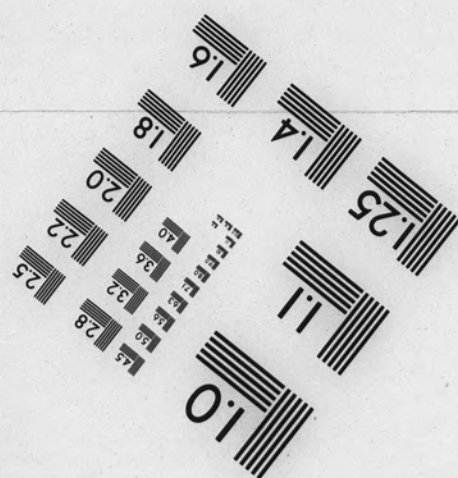
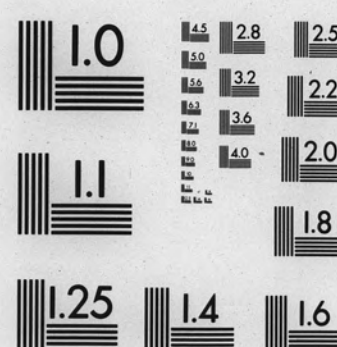
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Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
301/587-8202



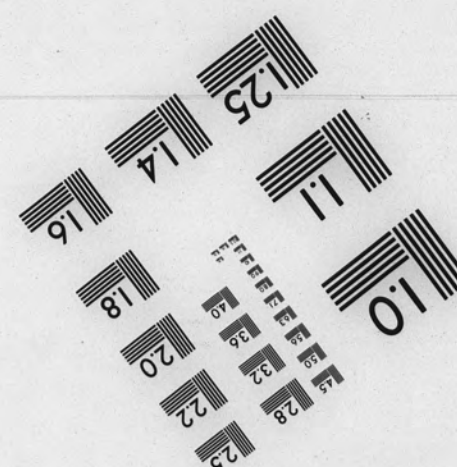
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15267

JOURNAL OF FRANCOIS MIGNON

— 1968 —

15268

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Monday, January 1st, 1968.

Memorandum:

.....and a happy New Year to you.....

Sprinkles and chill continue, the thermometer in the 30's. We are promised the same thing through Thursday. One rejoices that the snow remains to the north of us and I hold the thought it may remain there.

J. H. returned from the hospital this morning, I am glad to report. There seems to be much influenza running around and about. Giles Millspaugh was running a temperature around 105 yesterday. I suppose there are lots of forms of flu and the present type appears to be the kind that is swift in running up high temperature and then, as seems so characteristic of such things in children, so in the grown-ups in the present malady, the temperature returns to normal with remarkable speed.

I think I mentioned in yesterday's memo that J. H. had phoned me on Saturday night, reporting a prolonged conversation on the 'phone with Marianne Applegate who spoke about coming over here to pick up some paintings from Miss Hunter and honoring me with a visit, --all on Sunday. Well, she didn't appear on Sunday but this morning about 11:15, asking me if I would take two ladies off her hands, one of them being Mrs. Applegate. Apparently J. H. had not told her about the Saturday night telephone conversation which he had reported to me. Celeste said she would send them off toward the side gate but I did not encounter them there and so continued to Celeste's where sherry was being served. The two ladies intended to make a tour in spite of the rain but I chanced upon a happy medium of short-circuiting that. I mentioned the Hunter murals in the African House which they wanted to see first and while gazing at that display, I remarked to them that since, as they had just mentioned that they wanted to contact the artist, they were most fortunate in being here just at the present moment as this was the ideal time for them to catch her at her house. They jumped at that bait and said if I didn't mind they would forgo the tour in hopes of catching her and so pulled right out. This pleased me greatly as it offered me an opportunity to get on to dinner which I might have missed completely had they not halted for both ladies were in a vaguely afternoon of senseless chatter.



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I did not call James today although I should have liked to wish him a Happy New Year. My morning was completely taken up with one thing and another and as he is a late sleeper, I did not want to disarrange him too early. Knowing that he enjoys watching the football games, I did not try to establish contact in the afternoon. The Sugar Bowl, Rose Bowl and Orange Bowl kept the sport's world pretty well glued to the TV screen from 11:45 until I know not what hour in the evening. Carmen called late this evening to say that her brother-in-law, a sports hound, had complained bitterly after seeing the New Orleans and Las Vegas games, not having had enough, when Carmen and her sister switched the TV from sports to the Benny Goodman story which they were especially anxious to see in as much as their nephew, Dick "inslow," appeared from beginning to end in the Goodman opus.

Carmen had not heard of Aunt Willie's death and had seen nothing about it in the papers. That there should not have been a lengthy obituary with at least one likeness of the lady struck Carmen as unbelievable in view of all the activities Aunt Willie had participated in years, President of the U. S. Federated Garden Clubs, etc., not to mention cracking of the whip in Louisiana to effect various pieces of legislation.

About 5:30 this afternoon, Mrs. Walker called me to say she was prepared to read to me at some length from the thesis she is doing for her M. A. degree. I had discussed various phases of the work over the past several months and was anxious to hear how the material had been woven into the thesis but I know perfectly well that the hour was impossible, what with the people across the fence and the Delphin kids up the road making much use of the phone at that hour. We started out but didn't use far before the clicking on the wire became so constant that one could understand very imperfectly and so we disconnected the connection so far as we were concerned. The part she was reading had to do with the examination of hundreds of papers by white children in the Parish schools and an equal number of papers by colored children of the same age in their schools. The modern age, particularly in the scientific fields, makes clear communication

either in the written or spoken word a necessity essentially one of precision. In both the white and colored forms of communication, it appears the colored child has a difficulty in that the basic speech he develops from his home prior to and during his school years is a combination of various types of English or American, hobbled by influences from Gullah sounds and forms as handed along to the children and grandchildren of the slaves of a century back so that the child is left with a speech that is a mixture of the two and

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Tuesday, January 2nd, 1966.

Memorandum:

Cloudy in the 40's.

James dropped in to see me, arriving rather earlier than usual, --somewhere between 9 and 10. He remained for dinner and for a couple of hours afterward. I was glad to see him even though it did knock out secretarial assistance I had been counting on.

He said he had talked with Kay last night. She said the weather had been miserable, --rainy and cold all weekend. There had been a single exception when the skies cleared just at the time of the funeral when the skies cleared, only to close in again immediately after the services were over.

He said she had called on Saturday night, asking him to search among her papers at 406 to find an obituary for Frarley had written years ago. In view of the confusion in her office because of the pushing around of things during the recent re-doing of the house, James had quite a search before succeeding in tracking it down. He then phoned the person in Charleston in charge of the funeral and read the somewhat extended article word by word which required quite a while for the person in Charleston taking it down as it was all done long hand. He said the final line read:

"New Orleans papers please copy."

He said he thought the possibly the Charleston papers did not carry the obituary before yesterday and that probably the New Orleans papers would accordingly run it a day or two after that. It seems odd in this jet age that such slowness would crop up in the news service.

On the news front, it was impressive to learn that another transplanting of a human heart had taken place in South Africa by the same surgeon who had performed the first operation such a short time ago. It seems to me it was only a week ago last Sunday the surgeon appeared on TV and radio out of New York before going to call on L. B. J. at the latter's Texas ranch. How the world does turn a housewife do spin around. I hope heart failure doesn't result in the ranks of the racial purists when they learn the heart of a mulatto was used in giving the white dentist his new heart. Old Leander Perez must be having a fit about such doings in the field of surgery.



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The librarian of Northwestern called me this afternoon to ask if he might come down for an afternoon chat one of these days. I can never remember his name which is Kinsey or McKensie or some such and a very nice person. He mentioned that Mrs. Walker had spent the evening at his home recently, much interested in Puerto Rico and the prospect of going there to teach. Mr. Kinsey lived there for a number of years and said he liked it at that time which was before half of Porto Rico floated up to New York with a view of making quick fortunes and then returning to the Caribbean. He said he assumed that few if any of them ever made any money and that probably none of them ever returned to the native island. He did some speculating as to what is lost and what is gained--if anything,--when simple sons of the soil, responding to an urge to wander afield, losing their sweet simplicity along the way and so often gaining nothing in true compensation in the realm of knowledge of the outside world to compensate for what they lost along the way.

Mr. McKensie said he understood Claitor is to bring out a photographic book by Mr. Register. I said I understood the book was already off the press but added nothing more. Claitor is also putting on the market a biography of Earl K. Long. I should not imagine that would have a very wide appeal to people outside the Pelican State and it is my guess that most people inside the State are still thinking, if they think, as forever overshadowed by his brother, Huey.

I mentioned the Applegate business of yesterday to James today. Applegates were well known to James for they had a plantation right near the 40 Acres store where James worked back in the 1930's. He said it was odd how only empty holes resulted from oil drilling all through that area except on the Applegate property. At the time James lived in that area, it was estimated that the Applegate field held at least one hundred million barrels of oil on which the Applegates were receiving from two to four dollars a barrel. Both Applegate senior and junior, the latter being the one who married Joe Evan's daughter who was here yesterday, were both heavy drinkers and withal quite disagreeable. I don't suppose the junior Applegates can really drink up two or three hundred million dollars worth of whiskey but it would appear they are doing the best they can.

Doreatha had to go to the dentist this afternoon for an extraction did not return to give supper. I'm beginning to feel a little hollow inside and think I shall see what I can think up by way of satisfying the inner man forthwith. Perhaps an avocado salad, so me melted cheese on toast and a slab of chocolate pie might hold promises alike for satisfaction and indigestion.....

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Wednesday, January 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued drizzly and chilly.

But there was a ray of sunshine in the mail when I discovered a lovely New Year's greeting card from little Miss Lee. The message it bore was so sweet that the gloomy, dripping clouds didn't matter at all. That notes from Leston up to December 22nd had already been received suggests that the holiday mail must have jogged along just about on schedule.

There continues to be lots of talk about influenza around and about. School teachers throughout the State are speculating on the wisdom of suspending classes for a while, especially in those institutions where less than half the students are in attendance. The bug seems to be flying around this end of the river, too. Doreatha got along alright with the dentist yesterday but she did not appear to cook today, what with flu having caught up with her.

Celeste's servant 'phoned me this morning to say that her mistress was in bed, afflicted with her old gall bladder difficulty and accordingly would be skipping coffee. I was reminded, however, that since Doreatha would not be serving noon dinner, J. H., the clerk and I would be dining across the fence. We did just that but we did not see our hostess who remained in bed.

I listened with interest to the President's suggestion that in order to prevent additional out-flow of the American dollar, tourists would do well to give up European trips in favor of travel in the Western Hemisphere. I doubt if a mere suggestion about this matter will make much difference in travel plans. I hope there may not be any legislation or better still no need for legislation to prevent European travel. Of course we both know that for many people, travel is the thing and for many people it doesn't matter at all in which direction they go just so long as they are going. It is possible, of course, that simply on Presidential suggestion, some people will be glad of an excuse to head off for South America or some such. As for the politicians, especially Congressmen, a lot of them go kiting off to poor countries because through the Federal Government, they can find ready means to obtain no-account money of the impoverished countries, a barrel of comparatively worthless currency for little or nothing in American dollars so that their junkets under the prestige



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of Federal sponsorship makes it possible for them to journey in fine style with foreign money which the Government has accepted as token payment on goods supplied out of taxes paid by its citizens into the Federal treasury.

I am frequently being surprised that Congressmen, especially Senators, fly off at the drop of the hat to visit foreign climes without bothering to await the end of a Congressional session. I had heard that the senior senator from Louisiana had planned that Congress would be finished with its labors by last November 20th when he would take off for a joy ride to the Orient. But when Congress did not wind up its business, Congressmen did not bother to remain to complete their jobs but took off regardless. I was especially surprised that the Illinois Senator, Percy, should have gone off on a junket while Congress was still in session. I was equally surprised that he took his wife and a photographer along on the journey to boot. It seems to me there's enough going on in the Saigon area to keep people busy without having to take time out to look after Senators with their wives and photographers. I suppose one big difference between the traveling of Congressmen and ordinary citizens is the fact that the American Embassies and Consulates abroad have to jump crooked to make things easy for their progress whereas the majority of average citizens must pay travel agencies to make their reservations for them.

It is possible, of course, that one man in Europe might be happy to see the tourist trade slow down to a trickle,-- "Tall Charlie", but something tells me that even he might not relish the economic pinch, should once the tourist come to a halt.

Thanks to little Miss Lee and to the drizzle, cold weather, I have been traveling in France all day through the pages of the beautiful Christmas gift, so bubbling over with loveliness on every page. As I move from one glorious collection of photographs to another, I constantly find myself wondering that there should still be so much beauty in the world in spite of the difficult experiences so many of these lovely places have gone through. On the negative side, it is depressing enough to get down the list of a few chateaux one knows about only hearsay since they have long since vanished and yet, on the positive side, how thrilling it is to turn through these pages and revel in the beauty that remains.

And now I must begin to think about supper, after which I am going to look at some more pictures. There are so many things about which one may rejoice and how eternally indebted I am that little Miss Lee has done so much to make this so.....

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Thursday, January 4th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, occasional drizzles and cold on the 30 to 40 scale. The clouds are thinner tonight for although I can catch no glimpse of stars and the veils around the moon are too heavy to let her loveliness be seen, still I can by the glow through the gauze, tell where she is guiding her golden chariot.

It was a quiet day at this bend of the river. I saw my 9 o'clock coffee partner. She is better after a day in bed and planned to go to town this afternoon or tomorrow morning.

This noon just after dinner, Father Anthony came to see me. He is planning another visit to his native Poland,--the third in the last few years. Aside from the charm of my conversation I suppose the underlying purpose of the courtesycall was to remind me of his impending vacation, hoping that I, along with the members of his parishoners, will join in procuring the funds for him to make the trip. I suppose Father Frederick, his immediate superior at the Ile Brevelle Church, may contemplate the Polish junket with a degree of satisfaction since le pere Antoine would at least be out from under foot for a few weeks. It is said the gentleman from Poland is not at all interested in anything other than trying to have a good time on his own hook and accordingly he is unhappy most of the time since his post pays him too modest an income for much travel. Often when I see him, I am reminded of the line in the inaugural speech of J. F. K., wherein he said "Think not about what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country". Substitute the word church for country and the admonition might be directed to advantage to le pere Antoine but, I fear, he wouldn't get the point.

Quite by chance at 7 o'clock tonight when tuning in for CBS news I ran across a re-broadcast of discussion of CBS correspondence covering various world posts around the world. They are as well informed in opinions concerning international affairs as one is likely to bump into, I suppose.



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I must admit, however, that when they were done, I found myself as confused as one invariably finds himself after listening to experts, not one of whom appears to agree with the findings of the others. I was especially impressed by Mr. Burdet or however that gentleman spells his name, when he opined that Israel's greatest misfortune was in winning the little war with the Arabs last June since the mere winning of it would produce undying hatred of the Israelites by the Arabs from which all sorts of dire things might flow in the future. This opinion may well be true but even so, it seems to me the alternative which is to say, the losing of the war by Israel strikes me as something that would have been worse, had the Arabs won. Perhaps there were more alternatives to be considered other than winning on the one hand or losing on the other but the speaker found little chance to pursue such speculations. In short, most of the things I heard on the various subjects touched upon left me quite as much at sea as I had been in hoping to comprehend such events as I had been prior to listening to the program.

I am happy to report that Doreatha was back in the kitchen again today, -- glad for her return to good health and glad we didn't have to impose our presence on the house across the fence, thereby enabling the lady to return to her accustomed rounds without added guests at the dinner hour.

Mrs. Walker called this evening to read me from the Maurice biography of Proust. The part read had to do with the Dreyfus business and I listened without comment although had I been listening to another's reading I should have broken in to remark upon one or two points about the anti-Semitic uproar which intensified the whole Dreyfus matter. There was a portion of a letter of admiration by Proust to Anatole France and some reference to Robert Montesquiou, Madame Straus and others. I was especially interested in the way the author, perhaps possessed of a Jewish strain, handled the chapter. With Proust's mother being of a Jewish family and Anatole France, I suppose, also being Jewish and all the other people mentioned having more or less Jewish strains, too, it was interesting to see how the author handled the whole chapter. Of hand it does seem a little odd that Proust should have been writing Anatole France to subscribe to some paper on the Dreyfus matter since it would seem that at that particular time a statement from anybody with Jewish connections might have cut little ice in the ranks of the hounders of Dreyfus.

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Friday, January 5th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Last night, after the moon withdrew, the clouds remained but they didn't start dropping rain until 3 o'clock this morning. After that they kept us in a constant drizzle until now and we are promised rain through tomorrow. The thermometer remained in the 30's all day and will not go below that segment of the mercury until later tonight, it is said, when sleet is promised for the northern part of the State. I trust we remain well below the northern section.

Today's post brought a letter from Mrs. Aiken, devoted to the book L. S. U. is planning to bring out late in February or early in March, -- "Twelve Years a Slave".

I had suggested some time back that she write me a letter telling me of her interest in the book and this letter is in response to that request. As I had mentioned to her when outlining some publicity for the publication, I recommended that she write such a letter with a view to part or all of it being incorporated in a column and this she did. There was no covering letter and so there was no reference to the December 28th date for the release of the Helrose disc.

I have been intending for some time to ask if the press has given much space to the Governor's mansion in Albany, following the fire there a few years back. At the time, I heard some discussion about the possibility of restoring the place or the likelihood that a new one might be built but I never did learn what was finally decided upon. I remember the place as it appeared in the 1930s, -- a rather crummy, G. O. outfit that seemed to offer nothing either by way of beauty and I was hoping that since Rockefeller, a man of taste, might have something to say about a suitable building to replace the old one.

I am wondering at the same time if the newspapers or magazines have had anything to say about a home for the Vice Presidents in Washington. The last I heard about that matter had to do with scouting about to find a suitable site. Having rejected the offer of two or three fine houses in the Capitol, the decision on a proper site had narrowed down to four possibilities. After that, I heard no more. I hope the project went through and that the



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new residence, if not long since completed, may at least be well on the way to that end. It has always seemed to me that the nation would do well to provide and maintain a suitable residence for the Vice President just as it does for the Chief Executive.

Carmen just called to report she ran into a picture of Randy Jack's prospective bride in tonight's Shreveport Journal. According to the newspaper account, the wedding is to take place in mid March in Houston. Carmen says that according to the paper, the picture of the bride was taken at Melrose. Why that fact should have been mentioned, I cannot imagine since there is little or nothing in the background of the portrait to indicate where the bride might have been at the time. If memory serves, Randy was taking pictures with his candid camera while the three of us were chatting in the living room here at Yucca. Carmen said she would send along the clipping within a couple of days and perhaps I can make out the setting if, indeed, there is any setting, and will send it along to little Miss Lee.

I believe Randy said he graduates from Yale Law School in February, after which he planned to marry and head out for Seattle where they will make their home.

The cold clammy weather continues to increase influenza and allied maladies, especially pneumonia, if, indeed, weather has anything to do with the circulation of such afflictions on the public. It is said the local hospital is filled to capacity although this Parish does not seem to have so many cases of flu as do those in the southern part of the State. Celeste is up and a round but apparently not circulating so much as usual. J. H. continues going to his office although he still runs a temperature. You may well imagine how surprised I was when I learned today that the folks across the fence have been planning to drive to New Orleans this weekend. I certainly hope they change their plans although as of today, the matter was being seriously contemplated.

As I don't believe in flirting with a cold, I continue to spend the major part of my days inside the house where I have plenty of desk work to keep me busy. I have a book or two I should like to read but I don't get around to doing so, feeling quite content whenever I have a moment to concentrate on the beautiful pictures of les chateaux de l'ile de France.

I hold the thought that little Miss Lee is remaining indoors and keeping snug and warm during these blustering January days.....

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Sunday, January 7th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cold, cold. It drizzled all day Saturday but stopped during the night. This morning, although somewhat cloudy, one did get glimpses of the sun and tonight the moon is pretty enough. It never did get above freezing all day, being 28 around three o'clock, usually the warmest part of the day, which was 28. Tonight it will sag to 12 above and the same is promised for the morrow.

This morning a little after 8 o'clock, my 'phone rang and when I answered, Celeste urgently said just this:

"I haven't had time to talk.... I just wanted to say we are leaving right now for New Orleans. Goodbye."

About 10 o'clock Ezra came by to say J. H. had left orders for him to cut off the water at the big house and across the fence. I walked with him to the big house so the faucets inside might be opened after the outside connections had been cut off so the water still in the pipes might be drawn off. With that done, Ezra said that if I would give him the key to the house across the fence, he would go over there and cut it off rather than open the faucets inside so they would also drain. I told him I did not have a key. He said that possibly they left the house unlocked. He went over but the house was closed tight. What the freeze will be doing over there tonight, I wouldn't know.

In Saturday's post came Aunt Willie's Christmas card, the same kind that Celeste had received a week before Christmas. I got to ask a secretary what the cancellation date on this one might be. I assume it may have been posted within the past 3 or 4. Perhaps it was written about the time Celeste's was but didn't get mailed until after the funeral. Perhaps Kay thought I might not have seen it and simply put it in the post. However the circumstances, I am glad to be able to pass it along to little Miss Lee. Isn't it odd that not yet has a Louisiana newspaper has carried an obituary.

Saturday's post also brought me a talking book entitled "Virgil Thompson" by Virgil Thompson, -- of all people.

I read quite a bit of it last night and found it very well done. The voice of the reader is just right, too, -- Kenneth Murdock, who gives it just the right "tongue in cheek" intonation. This autobiography presents an amusing picture of Thompson's



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childhood in Kansas City and thus far has carried me as far as the 1930's when he is living at 17 Quai Voltaire in Paris and is working on the music of "Four Saints in Three Acts" with much counter-dancing with Gertrude Stein. One runs across many a well known place and person in New York, Boston Paris and points in between. One of the virtues of the book is that lightness of touch, reminding me a little of the same gift that Cornelia Otis Skinner employs, so skillfully handled that one might almost fail to notice the profundities sprinkled through it. There is just a touch of the Henry Adams manner as demonstrated in "The Education of Henry Adams" and it is quite possible, although I am not sure about this, that it is doubly interesting to readers who are his contemporaries and accordingly familiar with many of the personalities mentioned.

I talked on the 'phone with James this afternoon. He said that in spite of the temperature being below freezing, his dog had been flattened out on the cold brick pavement in front of the house, stretched out at full length, obviously relishing the cold. It reminded me of occasions on wintery days when I, myself, have shivered simply looking at polar bears in the zoo, enchanted to jump onto the ice cakes being tossed into their pools for them to sit on to their immeasurable delight.

James said he had talked with Mr. Claitor who reported the "Shadows of Old New Orleans" seems to be selling very well. James wanted to ask me about the Jallen book, the manuscript of which he had handed to Mr. Claitor with a view to publishing. The question in his mind was whether it would be better to ask the publisher not to bring it out. I told him that Claitor had done so prettily by some of the Dorman books that I thought it better to go on the assumption that Claitor would do equally well by the Hatochez-Jallen thing. As I understand it, James has boiled down the Jallen script so that it is quite a short version and I suppose there would be not more than a dozen photographs in the book. The flower book of la Dorman that Claitor did a year or two ago carried excellent illustrations of flowers and it seems to me it would be best for James to take the chance with Claitor, especially since nobody else seems interested.

I covered some of the camellias, setsoomas and cumquatzes with sheets against the cold but whether that will keep Jack Frost from knocking them silly remains to be seen.....

15280

15280

Monday, January 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Our weather continues, the thermometer not getting above freezing. This noon there was a shower which seemed very odd. There must be upper air currents from the Gulf and, being warmer, these could produce rain for otherwise nothing but ice pellets could be falling. I am just returned from across the fence, having gone over there to turn on a couple of lamps in front of the house, assuming that the travelers will be returning tonight in face of frequent radio admonitions about avoiding highway travel because of the icy condition of all highways throughout the State. Last week the schools from here to the Texas-Arkansas lines were closed Thursday and Friday. On Saturday the broadcasts announced they would remain closed on Monday and Tuesday. Tonight they announced they would remain closed the balance of the week. This is because of influenza, I guess, since we are promised warming thermometer readings either tomorrow or Wednesday. My jaunt from Yucca to across the fence and back was an exercising adventure, what with everything under foot, especially the bricks, being as slippery as glass.

The brightest spot of the day was the arrival of the mail, bringing as it did, Wednesday's letter from Lyme.

I had not learned before that little Miss Lee had planned to lend a hand to former associates. "News of this made me realize how much more attention I would be paying to reports of atmospheric conditions in Lyme. I was especially impressed by the hours mentioned. I am glad the afternoon one is no later while I find the morning one surprising for its earliness. I shall be holding the thought that little Miss Lee will have some regard for her own good health in all this exertion. I have no doubt the undertaking held the promise of joys that may be achieved as a result of such expenditures of energies. I trust that labors involved, once the undertaking of carrying out the purposes to which these gains are to be put will not be too physically trying.

I so much enjoyed hearing about the Santa visit to the feathered friends. I'm afraid Santa didn't miss this way for the peacocks. I doubt if they even got around to hang up their stockings, being rather provoked at me, as I think they were, because I had consigned them to the Bastille for a while after they insisted on spending so much time in the public road.

Not until today did I realize the young lady mentioned in



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today's letter was an artist in her own right. I cannot imagine a lot  
gift than the one described. She must be a very busy person,  
what with a husband and home and offspring to claim her attention,  
yet somehow able to express herself in such artistic  
compositions. A painting from the brush of an unknown artist  
can sometimes delight us but the work of a person we  
know seems to hold so much more of value to us just be-  
cause that knowing them, they are implicitly a part of us.

It is good to know the New Year turned so pleasantly  
and that both kinsmen and friends could be about. I find  
the M. of A. and M. remains so clearly in my mind. I think  
of her frequently, holding the thought that all goes well in that  
household.

There were two or three telephone conversations with  
people in town today, mostly about the  
weather. On the Hatchitoches radio this morning, it was  
said the local power station supplying a section of the  
city including the college, failed at 5 o'clock. At 7  
o'clock, 2 hours later, the announcer said the power  
station had reported that "electricity will be restored as soon as  
possible". For the people in town, that must have been a cheerful  
message but not too surprising.

Carmen reported that the pipes froze at her house on Sunday  
afternoon as did two or three other people. James said  
his house was enjoying running water while Mrs. Chopin reported  
her pipes did not freeze since she had cut off the water and  
drained the pipes. The house across the fence had frozen pipes  
according to the maid. I am happy to report that the Yucca  
water system is functioning properly.

At daylight this morning, I was vastly repulsed at the  
sight of the big old sugar cauldron which I started to pass  
when going from Yucca toward the store. Thousands of birds obviously  
must have taken over the big grandiflora, a great branch of which extend  
over the cauldron. The latter, I am sure, had once two or three  
inches thick but one couldn't see the ice or the rim of the  
cauldron, perhaps 3 or 4 inches in width, so thoroughly had  
the bird droppings covered and re-covered the ice, the rim and  
the pathway along side. As soon as I can insert a spade  
or two under the ice, I shall with the help of August or somebody,  
try to engineer the whole cake of ice in an unbroken state  
over the rim and onto the ground. I hope I can somehow scrub the rim  
so most of the excrement doesn't drain down into the water for  
I imagine such fertilizer would not make the goldfish  
flourish at all.

I have just gone out to see what the weather is doing. It is  
still sprinkling and freezing. Verily this is January. I  
hope it is better for those who must travel in Lyme.....

08321

15282

Tuesday, January 9th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Drizzley but a little less cold, the thermometer easing from  
the 30's to the 40's.

The folks across the fence did not come home last night but  
did make it this afternoon although I have not seen either of them.  
J. H. said he didn't enjoy the trip much, according to the clerk, who  
said J. H. had stated intestinal influenza and robbed the trip of  
pleasure. On arriving here, he went on to town and so I did not see  
him at supper. I suppose I may see Celeste on the  
morning at coffee time.

And speaking of Celeste reminds me that I intended to  
say yesterday that she had told me about the lovely purse she  
had received from little Miss Lee. I have seen none of her Christmas  
gifts and so have missed seeing that one. People in this  
area are acquainted with the inclusion of pennies in purses as good luck  
pieces and I think it was charming there were good luck pieces  
included in her's. She was also enchanted with the delightful note  
she had received from little Miss Lee.

The fourth of Clementine Hunter's husband's  
died this morning. His name was Atmos Remo, a brother of  
Madam Fugabou. Three or four years ago, perhaps longer, it was the  
brother of Atmos, Pal Remo, who shot off the leg of Atmos  
between the knee and ankle.

It will be interesting to see how the artist re-acts to the  
loss of her former "helper". I was running through the names of  
some of the husbands of the artist. The first, a mulatto, was Charlie  
Dupry. There were a couple of children by that marriage, --  
the boy called Frenchie, who lives in Oakland,  
California, and a daughter, Rosa, who lives in Alexandria, La. I know  
Frenchie but I never laid eyes on Rosa and I never hear Miss Hunter  
mention her although I believe Rosa has been up this way once or twice  
recent years.

The second husband was Manuel Hunter, a negro, by whom there  
were two children, Mary known as Jackie,  
one time wife of Clyde Claude Emmett Davis, and King Hunter.

The third husband was Cleveland Burden, a negro, and there were no  
children by that alliance.

Then came Atmos for a little while but that didn't  
last very long. Atmos was a negro, too.  
Then there is Joseph Benjamin Metoyer, fondly known as Pa.



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He is a mulatto, of course, and it is more or less a one-sided romance with Miss Hunter doing the courting. One assumes there will be no offspring by that union, what with Miss Hunter being in her 80's but one can never be positive about anything which Miss Hunter might achieve, once she sets her mind to it.

I 'phoned James to pass along the news of Miss Hunter's loss. He says he will speak to the artist about painting a black angel in full flight, one of the angel's legs being a wooden one just like Atmos. It would surprise me no at all if she turned out just such a winged figure.

Thanks to the rising temperature and the drizzle, I eased the big cake of ice out of the sugar cauldron this morning and cleaned up the rim but I am not sure that did any good other than the satisfaction that it was momentarily cleaned up for tonight billions of birds are back in the same places, making more pelka-dot designs, I suppose. One can see other evidences of the quantity of birds that have added to the imposing numbers in that last few days. Several Chinese magnolia branches broke last night under the rweight as did a huge branch from a grandiflora magnolia along side the chapel, the branch being four or five inches in diameter and perhaps 15 feet in length. It wouldn't seem enough birds could settle on such a branch in sufficient volume to tear it off the trunk of the tree but there it is.

I read some more last night from Virgil Thompson's Virgil Thompson. It's a long book and probably is of more interest to readers acquainted with some of the numerous personalities mentioned in every chapter. I have reached 1934 when the production of "Four Saints in Three Acts" is being staged. Miss Stein and r. Thompson had had a falling out prior to the presentation of the opera but had dismissed their differences after a year or two, -- about the time the piece was going into production, Miss Stein being in Europe at the time, Mr. Thompson engineering the details of staging the thing in the United States. I recall attending the New York presentation with the boy friend but, --and this does seem exceedingly odd to me, I had but completely forgotten that all the actors and actresses were negroes.

I also listened to another chapter of the Maureis biography of Proust, up to about 1904 or 15, I guess. It was along about then that little Marcel's mother, a widow, died and Marcel got around to being his first volume of "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu". --- "Du Cote de Chez Swann" of course. Maureis handles the biography thus far better than I could. I read this last night and it is standing up against the best business.....

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Wednesday, January 10th, 1966.

Memorandum:

We were promised a glimpse at the sun today but the clouds heard nothing about that and so there was no sunshine at all but there were a few sprinkles by way of compensation and the thermometer stood at 40 which is much better than in Lyme.

In the mail came a check from La Applegate made out to Clementine Hunter. La Applegate blandly suggested I have the artist paint a picture with a blue instead of a pink sky. After that job had been accomplished, I was asked to put the picture on a bus and send it to La Applegate over Ferriday way. Instead of going to town and sending a package by bus, I shall enclose the aforesaid check in the mail, letting Uncle Sam deliver it to La Applegate, recommending that she place her orders directly with Miss Hunter who may send it according to Applegate instructions.

Another letter in the mail came from Sister and I laughed in my beard at the way I had neglected being thankful for the present inclement weather for Sister threatens to honor us with a visit as soon as the weather improved. Prior to receipt of her letter I had thought how pleasant it would be to have some sunshine but now I am not so certain if such a price must be paid for it.

Right now while I think of it, let me hasten to say what I had intended to say yesterday and the day before, to wit, I pray that little Miss Lee will not attempt writing during these busy times. One may catch up latter after the present pressures have eased. Conserving one's strength at the present is of paramount portance and I trust little Miss Lee will act accordingly.

It isn't likely that metropolitan papers will have anything to say about University publications but I thought I would mention the fact that the Northrup book, "Twelve Years a Slave" is being put on the market "the last of January or the first of February". That date doesn't seem very precise but it is the only one I have received. I



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have done about a third of a column about the forthcoming item, using the Eakin letter to cover the balance of the column. This column, "Twelve Years a Slave" supposedly will appear "late in January or early in February", about the time the book does, I hope. I mention the matter of the re-issuing of this volume, however, on the vague chance that it might get a line in papers outside Louisiana.

Tonight's CBS news quotes Governor Romney as predicting rough times in the cities next summer and the possibility of guerilla warfare in America that would make southeast Asian doings look like child's play. While the Governor may have good grounds for such predictions, he is a fool to voice them at just the time he is beating the drums for the New Hampshire primary. He thought he made a grave political blunder a while back when he talked about having been brain-washed. I think he has made an equally inept pronouncement in today's statement which just about ought to take him out of the running if, indeed, he had not already succeeded in having accomplished this some time back.

Of all the potential candidates the Republicans have to offer at this moment, Governor Rockefeller strikes me not only as the best man thus far mentioned in Republican circles but also probably the only politician in the Republican ranks likely, as of now, to have a chance to win the election although that latter point is very doubtful as viewed from this distance as between January and November.

Along about first dark this evening there was a vast cannonade at the back of the bamboo hedge just behind the "Pillar of Honey". Several young gentlemen, armed with various types of blunderbusses, were banging away at the blackbirds. By there will be blackbird pie in the ovens tonight. I must make it a point on the morrow to invite the hunters into the garden in front of Yucca where they may disturb some of the thousands of birds roosting above the big old sugar caudron even though the elimination of a few thousand birds from that area probably will make scant difference so far as droppings and aroma go.

Thelma just called to say she and John had returned from south Louisiana. She and John were as disappointed as was James with the printing job on James' photographic book.

I am enclosing some clippings that may not be of interest. Can clipped them and I send them along regardless.....

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Thursday, January 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

I don't suppose anything necessarily has to be robust to be beautiful. Today and tonight the sky has been veiled with layers of gauze but in spite of that the sun today and the moon can be discerned and although pale and wane, both were lovely. It is said by the experts in this area that we have had four hours of sunshine in the past 10 days. The sun got credit today for a warm 50 and it is predicted the moon will lend a hand by keeping the mercury above the freezing point tonight. Even though there are no stars visible tonight, one has to admit the moon is making a brave if somewhat feeble showing.

I was impressed today by the way news has a way of getting around even though one may not hear it first hand. I have seen both my neighbors a couple of times since their New Orleans trip but neither one mentioned what I learned from Carmen who got it from her sister who overheard it in the lady doctor's office this morning. It seems the lady doctor was fulminating at the way her two patients at this bend of the river expect her to keep them well in spite of the fact that they will not follow instructions. She had told them both to stay and home and rest and not go chasing up and down the big road whereupon, as we all know, they both headed right out down the road to the Crescent City. While there, it turns out, they both got a fright when J. H.'s temperature, according to the thermometer he took with him, shot up to 105 or 106. Lull Hankins had driven them down and in the evening J. H. had handed Lull the thermometer, asking him to sterilize it. Lull had gone into the bathroom and done just that, in a manner of speaking, bringing it back and handing it to J. H. who was lying down. After the first flurry on reading the thermometer it was discovered that Lull had sterilized it by running hot water on it and it was the temperature of the hot water that the instrument was registering when examined.

The Association of Hysterical Women are planning their annual banquet to be held at the Country Club on Saturday, February 24th. As banquets go, it probably will not be very large, perhaps four hundred or so. They have invited Leston to be the guest of honor and guest speaker. Hummmmmmmmm.

Of the enclosures, I am under the impression you will discover a laugh in the uncertain salutation of the



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letter from Mr. Utterback, writing from far off southeast Asia. It is interesting to learn he is a farm boy from Virginia. I shall dash off a note to him tonight, talking about all the nice things I can remember about Virginia for people on the other side of the world like to see familiar names in their home State. I shall tell him about some of the pets and friendly animals in this area and ask him if he notices any animals where he is located, tamed as pets by the natives.

Last night I read a little more from Virgil Thompson's *Virgil Thompson*. I ran into something I had never thought about before. He was remarking that Gertrude Stein had said to him that one difference between Jewish and Christian concepts is that when a Jew is dead, he is dead in contrast to the Christian notion that when a Christian died he goes on living in another existence. Surely the Old Testament has something to say about Heaven and off hand I remember that went to Heaven on a ladder in the Old Testament and another gentleman who took off for the same place in a flaming chariot. But giving the matter more thought, I guess we owe it to the New Testament for most of the talk about Heaven, especially in the teachings of Jesus and even more so in all that rigamarole in Revelations, the book in the Bible of all others that seems to me to have the least place in the Good Book.

One virtue of Virgil Thompson's *Virgil Thompson* is the fact that you can pick it up, read a little, then put it down and then pick it up again without too much distress in doing either and always finding something interesting or at least familiar names and places. I laugh in my own beard at the memory of certain characters encountered in the book, some of them having been fairly well known to me a long time ago but utterly forgotten until undertaking the present reading.

The news in Mrs. Spinks' letter came as a surprise, to say the least, and the more so coming to hand and to my reading of the same at just about the hour she mentioned as being the hour for her surgery. I suppose operations take place any time of the day but somehow I had thought of them as being scheduled for early morning when planned in advance.

I'm hungry and must raid the icebox. I hold the thought there may be a sun and moon over Lyme.....

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Friday, January 12th, 1968.

Memorandum:

No sunshine today. There was a mist during the morning and a cold breeze from the north during the afternoon. The sky remains cloaked with clouds. Thermometer reads 37 degrees.

But there was ample sunshine in today's post from Lyme, what with Wednesday's letter to hand with all the news radiating from that quarter.

I am so glad to learn that a breathing spell was taken by little Lee and I for all the future ones that can be declared. I shall be holding the thought that the time between now and the end of that endeavor may evaporate quickly.

I am, of course, delighted to have news of auntie and the assumption that she is doing alright. Perhaps her Christmas was a boost to her happiness. I hope so.

I am also glad to have news of the former neighbors although I must say it does seem to be somewhat on the negative side. In a way, I rejoice that atmospheric conditions at the time discourage the trip to visit the ailing since I feel strongly that little Miss Lee at the present time of stress should be getting all possible relaxation under present pressing circumstances.

It was such welcome news in having such a clear appraisal of the book covered by the observations of one who knows a good printing job when one sees it. Obviously James was right in his feelings about it. Perhaps the price, twelve dollars and fifty cents, was a factor in the decided shock he received for it would seem off hand that a book of that size and thinness could be better produced. It seems odd that Claitor who has turned out such excellent reproductions photographically, as in the case of Dr. Dorman's *"Natives Preferred"* should have been a party to such a book as the present one, especially as it is obvious that the black eye will be, not on the author, but altogether on the publisher. If there should ever be a re-printing of the book, it will be interesting to see if the next edition will be better. I take it, it couldn't be any worse.



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I never thought of it until today, --the fact that one may have a half sister-in-law but I suppose one can. Mrs. Carroll died today. She was among the first batch of children by the elder Williams who had several offspring such as Mrs. Carroll, Ruth Pierson, Mrs. Alcock, Mrs. Neely and so on. When the mother of these children died, Mr. Williams died nothing less than marry a second time and he got another batch of children including J. H. and R. B. Williams, Beth Cloutier, Evelyn Grace and so on. All the above sets of children are half sisters and brothers, of course and so, I assume, the husbands and wives of all of the above would be classed as half sisters-in-law and half brothers-in-law. I shall leave it to Natalie to set us straight on all this.

Mrs. Carroll lives on Washington Street, Natchitoches, the northern extension of Front Street. It is an ante bellum place and very pretty. During the Civil War in 1864, it served as headquarters for General Dick Taylor. Early in this century it was the home of Cousin Anna Walmsley with whom Miss Cam used to stay over night when making an infrequent trip to town. Mrs. Carroll has three daughters, one of whom is Mrs. Fitzhugh of Baltimore who may have written me once in a while in times passed. Because I remembered that recently Clara Gennung and Mrs. Walker had gone to the Carrolls for tea during the holidays, I thought Clara would be interested in the news which I mentioned to her this afternoon when she called me on the phone to tell me about her dog and his fine tricks. Clara said:

"Oh, no, you must have that news all mixed up because my daughter and I had tea with her only a week or two ago."

I read a little more from Virgil Thompson last night. It is good for my memory, recalling as it does some people and places I had almost forgotten and at least one place I must have known but cannot recall at all. He mentions that in the 1940's he lived at the Chelsea Hotel on 23rd Street. This cannot possibly be London Terrace which I can remember well enough for I remember all the doings that went on there when the corporation trying to gain control of all the individual property holdings in that block experienced pronounced difficulties with some of the owners. I can remember the Metropolitan Life building between the park and Lexington Avenue but the Chelsea Hotel eludes my memory completely. Perhaps, like London Terrace, the Chelsea was of recent vintage and even later than London Terrace.

I pray that little Miss Lee may be taking good care of herself.....

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Sunday, January 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold, --28 by day and night without much fluctuation.

Natalie called me Saturday afternoon for a chat. She wanted to tell me about various details regarding the funeral planned for this afternoon, --and of Madame Carroll. One of her daughters had thought 2 o'clock on Sunday would be the proper time but one or another member of the family thought it should have been held on Saturday afternoon since the Green Bay Packers were staging a TV football game for Sunday. But the Sunday date was maintained and I suppose I shall have reports about the proceedings on the morrow.

I was curious to learn something about graduation at Northwestern next week or whenever the degrees are awarded. I was quite interested in a confidential report about how honors are awarded for scholastic achievement. Students must receive a high standard throughout to be put on the honor list and usually there are more people receiving acceptable grades than are especially honored by a classification that sets them ahead of all the others. This mid term graduation has 40 students with honorable grades but out of this group of 40, only 21 students can be put in the top bracket, not for their height in actual grades but rather by the votes of the faculty, meeting a month before graduation and deciding on which of the 21 out of the 40 shall be placed in the top level.

It turns out that Mrs. Walker has an enviable place scholastically far as grades are concerned but she will not figure among the most honored 21 because the faculty did not cast votes in her favor, due in large measure, no doubt, to Mrs. Walker's inimitable ability to alienate people including members of the faculty possessing voting ballots. Natalie said that she and several others spoke in favor of Mrs. Walker being included within the ranks of the 21 in view of her high scholastic grades but when the votes were counted Mrs. Walker was not "within the ranks".

I believe this meeting took place about Christmas time and shortly afterward someone present reported the supposedly secret meeting reported the results to Mrs. Walker.



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I suppose the reporter may have been Catherine Bridges, head of the Louisiana Room at the Library. Mrs. Walker has never mentioned any of the above to me.

Natalie confided to me that she herself is thinking of changing from the Department of English to some other, possibly to the Library Department. Rumors and speculation has indicated that Miss Bridges may be on the way out. Natalie, I think, would welcome the Louisiana Room as a new domain for it embraces "Old and Rare", I believe and is more or less independent of the rest of the Library.

At this season of the year, the President of Northwestern and his wife give a series of dinners to prominent Parish citizens and next Friday both the people across the fence and Natalie and her husband are bidden to dine. Nobody seems to know if the President knows anything about personnel operations within the college but I think Natalie is wondering if something about the Louisiana Room maybe mentioned to her at that time. My guess is that it will not be brought up at such a time.

It was cold and the ground frozen on Saturday morning when the grave diggers got busy but things got warmed up when the merchant-planter sent them a bottle of whiskey and a bottle of wine. There was a sizeable gathering for the last rites for Atmos in spite of the cold. Prominent not among those present was Clementine Hunter.

Olyte Gallien, son of the late Mitchell, and his wife took their two year old daughter to the Alexandria City hospital on Saturday afternoon, the little girl suffering from pneumonia. On arriving at the reception room of the hospital, the intern took a good look at the patient and waved the parents, the mother carrying the child in her arms, to a bench saying that they might wait as the child was obviously not seriously ill. When, finally, the Galliens were summoned to present their child, it was discovered that during the waiting period, the patient had died in its mother's arms.

I finished Virgil Thompson's Virgil Thompson last night. In more than one way, it is an excellent book although I am not sure that in future years, people, not especially interested in the first half of the 20th century musical world will find it as interesting as those of the present generation. Having finished the book in mid-evening, I sampled a little of Charlie Chaplain's "My Autobiography", finding the beginning a very sad picture of the actor's childhood.

So endeth and begineth another week. From radio reports, it sounds rough weatherwise in Lyme....

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Monday, January 15th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 30 to 50 range and tonight's moon is as big as a wash tub.

Perhaps I reported yesterday that the half sister of R. B. and J. H. Williams died on Friday and was buried on Sunday. That leaves Saturday in between and R. B. and J. H. attended the basketball game at the college on Saturday night. I had been mildly surprised when R. B.'s wife on Saturday afternoon had mentioned her husband had gone fishing in spite of the freezing temperature. I must be old fashioned in feeling even more surprised when I learned about the Saturday night game. It was remarked by the clerk who was present that he did not see the wife of either gentleman although R. B.'s wife frequently goes with him to the games. It is really possible, I suppose, that in this age when everyone is so crazy about sports that nobody even thought it odd that Mrs. Carroll's two half brothers should have been at the game while probably the rest of the family were at home receiving callers who came to pay their respects to the departed and to the family.

In the span of a lifetime, one takes it as a matter of course that one will witness a change of manners on the part of youngsters but one scarcely expects grown-ups to manifest such an innovation as demonstrated in this instance.

I didn't spend too much time out of doors today but I did attend to a couple of things, too long neglected. In the first place, I made the most of a tall ladder for which I had been waiting for the past three weeks and so was able to climb up on top of Yucca and re-place the sheet of tin anchored there to keep the rain from descending into the fireplace. By closing the opening at the top of the chimney, there will be less draft in my boudoir for, as you may recall, both the fireplace and the chimney are of generous proportions.

I also had to give thought to an old cedar between the big house and the weeping house, the cedar having toppled



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in consequence of recent high winds accompanying the rains. When it crashed, it carried with it some electric wires connecting the two houses and it seemed well to have the current dis-connected. I'll get a power sqw after the fallentree and get it hauled out as soon as it is out up.

It occured to me that the gold fish in the big old iron sugar pot could never stand the nigh ly dumping engineered by the birds, not until mid March, anyway. And so I scouted around until I had found a big old wooden door stored in the red topped barn which didnot quite cover the top of the cauldron but I placed it there and hunted up a couple more wide planks which provided ample coverage. I shall leave the big door flat across the top of the pot until the birds depart northward, turning back the two additional planks, a footwide, so the fish may get daylight during the day, putting them back in place every night. I am hoping to scoop up some of the gold fish and transfer them to the smaller sugar pot on the backgallery of Yuoca, a job that wouldn't be so messy, had not the birds already plastered the rim of the big pot.

I had a call from Mrs. Walker last night. She and her son are both in bed, flattened out by the flu. Clara, however, in her 80's seems to be impervious to colds and flu.

I talked with James this afternoon. He said he is entertaining plumbers who are engaged in connecting a washing machine. I suppose a washing machine might cover a variety of purposes. I can't imagine anybody washing clothing at 406 but possibly a dish washer might be in order and, for all I know, there may be washing machines for dogs although I shouldn't imagine the dog from the Arctic would feel at home in such a contrivance although he seems perfectly happy in his own air conditioned dog house. I didn't inquire as to where the machine was being installed in the house so perhaps it isn't at 405 at all but rather at 1226 where the doghouse is located.

I heard Mrs. Romney on the radio the other night, beating the political drum in favor of her husband. I have no doubt she is a very fine lady but, like her husband, she would be well advised to avoid politics in the first place and trying to make political speeches in the second place. Governor Romney strikes me as among the more inept speakers for natinal office. Verily, in the case of both husband and wife, silence is positively golden.....

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Tuesday, January 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair withal from 30 to 50.

At dawnning, I was surprised to discover that no birds had roosted in the magnolia shading the sugar pot. All the energy I had expended in trying to discourage the birds from roosting in that particular tree failed, --keeping a light on in the tree, hanging tin pans, showering the tree with a hose, beating the links with a bamboo pole came to nothing. Then, last night, the birds must have been struck by the presence of something they could figure out, --the covering I had put atop the sugar pot and not a bird would settle down in their roosting place about which they had been so adamant. Tonight there were no birds there either. I hope this simple introduction of a cover will continue discouraging them from their accustomed place and that they will join the other flocks in other sections of the gardens.

My old friend, Roberta Rue, died Monday and will be buried tomorrow. She was a nice person and I must refer to her in a subsequent memo.

Word came from Monroe, La., today, advising me that Miss Kate had willed me a hundred dollar bond which was certainly sweet of her. She left the choice of her books to several people including Mrs. Wenk. I assume the latter has not been advised of this fact as yet for she came down from Shreveport today for a few days and as she said nothing about the matter, it would seem likely she hasn't heard about it as yet.

James appeared a little after 10 o'clock and remained for dinner. It was when we went to the big house to dine that we learned the Shreveport lady had blown in.

James reported the work of installing the washers would go more rapidly if there weren't so many people concerned with the project. After purchasing the equipment, they were delivered at 406 and sometime later "installed", whatever that covers. But whatever that is, it is only the beginning for after the "installation" of the washers, plumbers have to be rounded up to see about adequate pipes. After that job has been completed, neither the "installers" nor the plumbers will connect the washers and the pipes and somebody else has to be called to effect that and then somebody else to turn on the water. I believe he said the plumbers received ten dollars an hour for their work which, according to the contractor who recently did the house over, can manage to string out the respective jobs over an interminable period. James said he had had in mind to build a little



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sun porch somewhere attached to the back of 406 but in view of all the doings to get a mere washer installed, he had decided to call off any future undertakings. He says the plumbers like to work on union jobs that embrace a considerable outlay and accordingly are reluctant to bother about repairing a mere pipe or adjusting any thing that doesn't entail weeks of work on the same job. Apparently there is a shortage of labor which is the only way I can account for such tomfoolery.

Mrs. Chopin 'phoned me this morning. It seems the State Health Department wants to close the case covering the case of her mother who supposedly died of typhoid somewhere in a trip of several days as between New Orleans and San Antonio in mid October. Although the Department has not contacted Mrs. Chopin's sister of New Orleans with whom the mother lived and with whom the mother made the trip, and, although the third sister, or second sister who was also on the same trip, is a trained nurse living in New Orleans who also has not been contacted, the Health Department of New Orleans writes to the Lady Doctor in Natchitoches, saying that Mrs. Chopin must be the carrier to typhoid and therefore should undergo examinations and treatment. Naturally Mrs. Chopin found that outrageous and she was scheduled to have a round with the lady doctor this afternoon on the subject. This is apparently one of those instances wherein a desk clerk in a big city wants to close a file and is taking this means to do it. I suppose it isn't too rare in all brackets of public organizations that an effort is made to close a case successfully simply by pinning something on anyone who cannot or will not stand up against such doings. I think the clerk who tried to pin this on Mrs. Chopin made a great mistake in selecting La Chopin as a victim.

Mrs. Walker called me this afternoon. I could scarcely understand her, her voice was so altered by the flu. Wisely she is remaining in bed.

Today's Natchitoches paper did not come but probably will on the morrow or Thursday. Carmen says that on the back page there is a wacky tribute to Mrs. Carroll, rather extended, written by her daughter, Mrs. Fitzhugh, and under the article the statement by the paper reads: "Paid Advertisement. LaFitzhugh is a bag and this seems to confirm that point...."

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Wednesday, January 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Beautifully clear weather with the thermometer continuing to play around in the 30 to 50 ranges.

I awakened this morning expecting to remove my whiskers before breakfast but I changed my mind about that when I discovered there was no water. During the night, the pump hidden beneath the back gallery of the big house, had played out. Oddly enough a pump on the river bank, quite separated from the one at the big house, also played out. Especially in the country, one always regrets the absence of water, so dependent is one on force pumps in case of fire. One also regrets the presence of too long a beard.

Formerly I could always raid the big sugar cauldron for a bucket of water but now that the birds have tinctoried that source of supply, one misses that up. With Cane River just across the road, it shouldn't be too far to travel there to fill a bucket but the recent rains have made the banks so soggy, one would have to use up a whole bucket thus drawn to get off the mud collected on one's boots.

Pump people and well people were summoned from town and they promised to have things gurgling in torrents before sundown night arrived without any water and I'm raiding the smaller cauldron on the back gallery, uncontaminated by the birds, for some kind of a shave and bath tonight before calling it a day.

I thought little Miss Lee would like to have the obituary enclosed. It is the one written by Farley O'Brien some time back and kept in the file at Natchitoches, being at the same time the one which James dictated over the phone when word came through from Charleston and that an obituary was in order. I asked James how long it took the inexperienced longhand secretary to take down the dictation. He said it could possibly have been the many hours that at the time it seemed to require.



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I'm counting on catching up with the President's Stat of the Union address before Congress tonight. I feel sure it will be re-broadcast on more than one station later tonight, especially for Rocky Mountain and West Coast listeners since it must have been about 5 o'clock on the Westcoast at the time the live broadcast was made in Washington.

I had set up my schedule so I would be free to listen when it began but just as the event was announced as about to begin, my 'phone rang. It was Mrs. Walker who needed my advice on some graduation point. The conversation lasted half an hour and I had left my radio turned on so I could step up the volume as soon as the conversation ended. As I returned the receiver to the instrument with one hand, I turned the knob of the radio with the other hand but tuned it right out again when the 'phone rang again just as the receiver was put down. It was after 9 o'clock when I got dis-entangled from the second call which let the Presidential speech out quite beyond recall so far as the initial broadcast was concerned. I shall try Denver at 11 o'clock and have no doubt I shall catch up with it there.

I guess I had better try knocking off a column in the mean time since it is difficult to get anything accomplished during daylight hours during the present Shreveport visitation. I notice the buds on the Chinese magnolias are swelling at a great rate and so perhaps it will be timely now to run a column on that subject.

The clippings about the French Kings who had Louisiana under their sceptres or however that word is spelled, scepters, is interesting in a way but all the facts contained in the article are well enough known to little Miss Lee.

I just stepped out on the gallery to see if any birds are roosting over the cauldron at this hour but there isn't a single one, I am glad to say. The moon, late in rising, is magnificent and I'm glad I took myself out of doors in quest of blackbirds, only to discover the marvelous moon.....

15298

Thursday, January 18th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair by day with pretty stars tonight. The thermometer in the 40 to 60 range. The Chinese magnolia buds are swelling impressively.

The best news of the day had to do with the diggers of the well, for it seems a newer deeper one was in order. The truck arrived mid morning, scuffled around until mid afternoon when the thing vanished although the operators threaten to return on the morrow to make some adjustments. Knowing nothing about the new wrinkles in well digging, I was much impressed to learn that modern machinery does the job in no time at all and that not iron pipes are used but plastic ones, said to be much better all around than metallic ones, even as to length of service which strikes me as remarkable.

About 3 or 4 o'clock this afternoon hot and cold water began pouring out of the faucets and at sundown I plunged into my first hot bath since day before yesterday and loved it.

After supper last night, our Shreveport guest returned to the camp between Fugate's house and the bridge where Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd who had brought Shreveport down in the first place; were spending the night. About 2 o'clock this morning, Shreveport came dashing over to the house across the fence, rousing up that household to call for an ambulance to carry Mr. Lloyd to the hospital, first the one in Hatchiteches and then to the one in Shreveport. J. H. Celeste went over to the camp to lend a hand and there was general excitement, Sister having awakened the Fugate and other cabin families as well as the household across the fence.

In all good time the ambulance arrived and by 6 o'clock this morning, Sister and Mrs. Lloyd were heading out for Shreveport. I am sorry Mr. Lloyd had the heart attack but it's an ill wind that doesn't blow somebody, sometimes lots of people, good.

Just before dinner this noon, I responded to a telephone call, --I. S. Willard, who got back from California last night. She gave a detailed account of her



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adventures in Los Angeles, Carmel and San Francisco. I had a couple of gentlemen waiting for me to go on to dinner with them and tried to break off the conversation but it took me a long time to get the idea across that it would perhaps be more convenient all around if we continued the conversation at some subsequent sitting. The important thing seemed to be that I. S. Willard had had a fine trip, found her sister-in-law not too strong, had seen her former daughter-in-law with I. S. W.'s grandchildren and something about Dallas which added me but about which I shall undoubtedly hear more about on the morrow. I didn't call back this afternoon or tonight.

Last night I finally caught up with a re-broadcast of the President's speech on the State of the Union. I thought it was good but was amazed at the frequency of the applause and the prolonged applause at the end for somehow it seemed to go on even longer than usual.

Finding myself fairly well awake at Mr. Johnson's finish, I concluded I had better read myself to sleep and so dipped into the Charlie Chaplin autobiography at an interesting place devoted in large measure to that particular chapter to entertainments in California given by William Randolph Hearst and Marion Davies. Some of the details were quite enlightening and this is the first time I had ever heard about Miss Davies' ability to "talk turkey" to William Randolph. Chaplin was a frequent visitor to the Davies open front house at Santa Monica as well as at the vast Hearst place at San Simeon, -- the latter having an acreage of miles and miles, -- about four hundred thousand acres, in fact. It is interesting that Chaplin was on equally friendly with Miss Davies and Mrs. Hearst, the former always vanishing from San Simeon when the latter visited the place. Chaplain has quite a lot to say about Winston Churchill at the Marion Davies place and later about Churchill's entertainment of Chaplain in the 1920's or 1930's in England.

Mrs. Walker just 'phoned. She is still running a flu temperature but seemed mighty happy because she had succeeded in getting her thesis filed today and is now hoping to get active enough to be among those present at college next Thursday when the degrees are handed out.

I hold the thought that all turns sedately in Lyme and that the health of little Miss Lee is tip-top.....

10621

15300

Friday, January 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to hazy and withal pleasantly mild as between the upper 40's and the upper 60's. A jacket was too warm when laboring out of doors during the afternoon.

I have received several inquiries during the past few months about Ile Brevelle. Perhaps I should do a column under just that title. Mrs. Carter of Colfax writes a note on the general subject. As you know, Boyce, La., is between Melrose and Alexandria on the west bank of Red River and Colfax is on the opposite east bank of Red River, leading one to suppose that a resident of the Colfax might well have some notion about Ile Brevelle in spite of the fact and better still, proving the fact that Ile Brevelle has always seemed to elude people as to where it is and what it is all about. I must drop Mrs. Carter a note and then dash off a column in hope the latter will help enlighten Mrs. Carter and other readers at the same time.

Over the coffee cups this morning, Celeste read me a letter from somebody asking for additional particulars about some point in a recent column, "Hunting Hunters". That column seems to have impelled quite a few readers to take quill in hand.

An hour elapses as between this paragraph and the one above. I. S. Willard called to ask me about some Indian matters around Natchitoches in the 1731 or 1732 period. She can think of the strange subjects to go delving into. From the early Indians we suddenly got entangled with the early Willards which had as little to do with the subject to hand as Louisiana has to do with Massachusetts in the colonial era. But it's all grist to my mill and I always come out with interesting information, that is interesting to me but, I suspect, to nobody else but I. S. Willard.

Two more extended interruptions as between this paragraph and the one above. Mrs. Walker 'phoned in a voice heavy with departing flu. She wanted to read me something from the Maureis opus on Proust. I thought the effort expended on trying to read might better have been spent in giving her voice



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some silent treatment. As I returned the receiver to the phone, Mrs. Chopin called to say that within the hour she was climbing on a bus, heading out for New Orleans because her sister who has been having the influenza thing was feeling left alone by her friends who, naturally enough, thought it wiser to give herself a chance to get over it. I think Mrs. Chopin very unwise to put herself through such a trip in the wake of her own bout with flu, traveling until 5 o'clock tomorrow morning and then returning at midnight on Sunday. She had received a letter from her husband today, reporting that he has been discharged after 8 months in the hospital, as being all well which seems quite a miracle. He reports that while his doctors were excellent, he attributes his survival to the Blessed Virgin and he may have a point there.

This evening the local radio station had quite a lot to say about the new residence being planned for the President of Northwestern, a building that the college should have had years ago. As you know, when Northwestern was established in the 1880's, it centered, that is to say, the campus centered around the classic Greek mansion of Henry Adams Bullard, the State having purchased the Bullard plantation for the establishment of a college. When Miss Cam attended school there, she lived with all the other students in the old mansion. Along early in the 1900's, when a residence was needed for the President, the politicians tore down the noble old plantation home and built a crummy building which has been occupied by Presidents ever since, the old home having been torn down for no reason at all. "The Pillar of Honey" at Yucca is one of the fluted smaller columns from the old Bullard mansion. According to the radio, the new residence being planned is to have a Greek revival gallery, the building itself facing Chapman's lake which winds through one edge of the campus and it is hoped that the somewhat uninspired politicians now in control, may be moved to give back a semblance of nobility which the original mansion possessed.

And now I must consult the ice box about a snack and thence to my downy pillow. I hold the thought all moves along sedately in Lyme....

00831

15302

Sunday, January 21st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Mild in the mid 40's to 60's, partly cloudy and wonderfully mild.

Early this morning J. H. and several other gentlemen left for a five or six days trip by automobile through peoan country westward. They planned to reach El Paso tonight, I believe, which, I suppose, is six or seven hundred miles from here. The radio says there has been five inches of rain in that area during the past 12 hours and that more is on the way. Jarred Pratt is among those making up the party and he is able to get around on crutches. Why these gentlemen seem to feel impelled to whiz through the country side in face of their uncertain health seems quite beyond my understanding but well within the lines that govern all their impulses to be on the go constantly.

As he-fitted the Sabbath, there seemed to be quite a lot of church news both on the radio and via the grapevine today. Beginning with the grapevine, there was a funeral at St. Mathew's Baptist Church this afternoon where they buried the auntie of one of the secretaries, an elderly lady whose clothing caught fire on Thursday when she backed into a gas heater. The gravey was busy because Nina Brown, mother of my old friend, Elam, was prominent among the numerous crowd, her prominence being based on the fact that Nina was drunk and made out she was having a heart attack which tended to swing the lime light away from the service up front to a rear bench where Nina was putting on her act. She was carried out of the church and placed in an automobile which headed out for town and the hospital but got only as far as the Sammy Balthazar honkey tonk where it stopped and where Nina spent the balance of the afternoon making further high-jinks.

Another church item has to do with the Pleasant Green Baptist



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Church near St. Francisville, not far from the Cottage. It is thought a butane tank exploded, injuring several people and destroying the church. I had known the church from years back and accordingly was impressed when I heard a radio account of the especially when the radio instead of calling the church by its real name, Pleasant Green, described it as the Pleasant Dream Baptist Church. There is a Baptist church in Mississippi, founded by a former member of the Pleasant Green Church in Louisiana but it, indeed, was called Pleasant Dream Baptist Church which may account for the confusion of names in today's broadcast. I have always thought that Pleasant Dream was much more imaginative than Pleasant Green.

There was a call from the Youngs of Campiti today, asking about securing a picture from the local artist. Such calls fro thither and you have too long been directed toward this side of the road and not the other so that I had no difficulty in summoning up my solution to that problem by simply recommending that the would be possessor of a Hunter canvas should direct the call to the artist herself at 379 - 8041 so that would and the artist could wage the battle directly and so avoid getting an innocent by-stander from getting hopelessly involved. It seems that Major Young of West Point is flying from San Francisco back to home base at West Point and is planning to stop over in New Orleans for to see his sister who lives there and his mama of Campiti who will be traveling there for the reunion, the mama thinking to pick up a Hunter along the way so the Major may carry it on with him to the Hudson Valley.

Lull Hankins who usually does globe-trotting with my neighbor called me early this morning to say he was not going on the pecon run with the merchant-planter, asking if he and his wife, might bring some college professors down here this afternoon. He might and so my afternoon was given over to a tea party which was pleasant enough but quite different from the quiet afternoon I had envisioned. Sarday saw a flock of people from Arkansas which was "love's labor lost" since the people, like goats, were primarily interested in crawling around over and under everything but interested, even as goats, in nothing they had to see.

The top buds on the Chinese magnolias are beginning to unfold and might pretty they are, too. In other words, Spring is just in the offing and the floral parade about to get under way.....

15304

15304

Monday, January 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum: Continued mild in temperature, following a slight shower about 4 o'clock this morning. Sunshine all morning and this afternoon until 4 when clouds gathered again. We are doing without stars tonight and I should be surprised if it rains again.

This afternoon Father Calahan came to see me, escorted by the Pole, le pere Antoine. Frather Calahan retired from active service in December. I forget how old he is, --85 or 90. He went up to spend sometime with Father Roble or Wroble or however that polish gentleman spells his name, Father Wroble having a church somewhere in Arkansas. Father Calahan says he is impressed by the mildness of the temperature here as opposed to that obtaining in Arkansas. He says he is going to remain here for a while. How all this works out with Father Fredericks who now has charge of the Ile Brevelle institution, remains to be seen. I should imagine the former head and the present head might find themselves treading on each other toes when housed under the same roof but perhaps priests manage such pinches better than other people. I hope so for everybody's happiness.

Mrs. Chopin called this noon to report on her weekend outing. As a change of scenery, it possibly had its advantages but it couldn't have been very restful, traveling all night onabus from Friday p.m. to Saturday at 4 a.m., but, like other people we know, possibly the urge to be pulling up and down the road provides more compensations than the rest of us can imagine. She reported getting back to Natchitoches at 2:20 this morning which doesn't seem to allow much rest between that hour and 8 o'clock when she returned to business.

As for myself, I was up and abroad earlier than usual, noticing at the same time the days are beginning to lengthen. Before we are able to turn around, Daylight Savings will be upon us again and I must say I have no great enthusiasm about that. I suppose one of my chief objections to that innovation is the fact that I lose so many of my radio programs when daylight is extended an hour into the night because many of my favorite broadcasts are from far away stations such as Denver, Des Moines, etc., and the programs from distances do not come through until at least a full hour after night closes her canopy to keep the broadcasts within reach of far away would-be listeners.



15305

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The annual scuffling in the cabins that generally characterizes the month of January is in full swing, -- families moving from one cabin to another, families during this lull in field operations breaking up and forming new combinations, individuals and families responding to the lure of bright lights in the big cities and conventional upheavals and re-settling constitutes the order of the day.

Robert's wife, "Lizar" is back home from the hospital, having learned nothing from her recent mis-adventures, having comprehended just enough to know she needs expensive medicine but unable to understand that the medicine isn't going to do everything unless she slows down. She was in town this afternoon going directly from the doctor's office to the drug store to pick up her prescriptions and then going down the street for half a block and investing in liquor which she uses for chaser after swallowing the medicine, the one intake cancelling the other.

Her son, Morel, seems to be having his usual lack of success with his domestic problems. Last night his present "wife", after a squabble, gathered up her belongings and her five or six children headed out with quite an assortment of impedimenta and departed for Baton Rouge where she probably has relatives or friends who ought to be unpleasantly surprised when a lady with five or six offspring suddenly presents herself.

Somebody said Peter Baptiste, for several years an Alexandria resident, was up this way this weekend, stopping by the store to see if the plantation had a field hand's job for him which it probably did not and so things revolve with abandon at this season of countre-dancing.

So turns the plantation in January and just now Tom and Remon started pulling at the screen door, putting their paws in the wire netting, pulling the screen back and letting it bang which is their way of saying they would enjoy a saucer of milk. I had some warming for them and taking it out on the gallery, I discovered the rain is coming down merrily. Now I think I shall pour a saucer of milk for myself and then see what news I can find on the radio but I may not extract much what with an electrical storm in progress.....

15306

15306

Tuesday, January 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

It rained an inch an a half as between 6:30 this morning and 6:30 tonight, the thermometer remaining in the 40's. We are promised fair skies and continued cool weather for the morrow.

I don't recall if we ever talked much about Hilda Perini, a Hatchitoches girl who used to spend some time here in the late 20's and early 30's. She was a gifted writer and some of her things appeared in magazines in those days but, in spite of her potentials with the pen, she never did much about it, having taken up marriage as a career and moving off, first to New Orleans and then to Shreveport. I mention her only because she came to Hatchitoches today to bury her mother, a member of an old Hatchitoches family who married an Italian of lesser family pretensions and lived happily ever after, at least, until 1968, having died this morning in Shreveport this morning and buried in Hatchitoches this afternoon with a speed reminding one of the zip people used to carry out such things in Hatches.

Carmen called me this morning to give me an account of her friend, Mrs. Markry Jones, mother of Bill Larson. Madam Jones has been tormented by arthrites for a long time and under-went surgery for it or some allied complaint, if there be such a thing. Carmen reports that Mrs. Jones has been given quite a lot of cortisone over the years, -- cortisone currently being frowned on by contemporary physicians as a deer of all sorts of bad things to the patient who has used it too liberally to fight off the rheumatic pains. It seems to me Carmen says cortisone does something odd to the flesh, making it like thin paper or some such unexpected thing which, in curing pain, is likely to turn out like operations that are successful but the patient dies.

Today's post brought one copy of a record today, -- A Visit to Melrose Plantation with -- shall I say -- me. The record evidently had rough going since it arrived broken and will be returned to Mrs. Eakin after the Post Office has checked on its condition on arrival. I like the picture on the cover, -- a likeness of the African House which, although not so beautiful as many we



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have seen, is very good and, in view of the title of the product, is more appropriate than would have been a likeness of the narrator. I shall be holding the thought that a perfect disc will become to hand in the morrow's mail if possible, or shortly after at least, so I may get it rolling in the direction of little Miss Lee. If another comes to hand before the latter part of next month, I may be able to use it at the luncheon the Hysterical Ladies are staging for the last Saturday in February or whenever it is the luncheon is scheduled to come off.

The plantation is giggling today over the latest twist in the most recent Morel performance. I may have mentioned yesterday that he has been living with a bag and her five or six children, the bag being the wife of Morel's uncle, the uncle currently doing a 15 year stretch in prison. The course of Morel's life never seems to run smooth and one example, --and there are lots of them, -- is the fact that the bag gathered up her several children and slid off to Baton Rouge Sunday night. Last night, it seems, Morel followed in the same direction. What he proposes to do with such an assortment when he catches up with them is anybody's guess. It is said the mother of the bag lives in Baton Rouge and is best remembered locally for having shot and killed McKinley Peace some years back for which she did time in prison. Let us hold the thought Morel is wearing his bullet proof garments.

I hold the thought that influenza isn't transmitted over the phone since everyone from whom I have received calls today gives or gave every evidence of being down with influenza or colds or whatever. Mrs. Walker was barking at a great rate and had difficulty in speaking while trying to inquire something about a column. Mrs. Walker did not go to business. Naturally she showed the greatest lack of good sense in tramping off the New Orleans last week, it seemed to me. Now the flu has come back in renewed force, putting her flat on her back. I have just stepped out on the gallery to observe atmospheric conditions and am happy to report billions of stars that have whisked away the clouds. Tomorrow there will be sunshine obviously and perhaps that will improve everyone's health. As for my own, I hasten to knock wood and report I am feeling quite full of vim and vigor, and, as of the moment, feel as though I needed another supper after a very pleasant one earlier in the evening including fried oysters that were yum-yum, in a manner of speaking. I hold the thought there is good health obtaining at little Miss Lee's house.....

15308

15308

Wednesday, January 24th, 1968.

Memorandum:

The sky was cloudless this morning, the thermometer stood at 31 and there was ice around and about. The sun shone all day and we are promised the same thing for the morrow.

But the best sunbeams were not from on high but in the post where I found a letter from little Miss Lee, invariably a sunburst to delight my heart.

I can well imagine what a merry-go-round turns in the neighborhood of Lyme. I hold the thought that no attempt at correspondence will be undertaken until the various pressures now obtaining has slowed down and little Miss Lee has had an opportunity to catch her breath. The news of the departure of a former neighbor came with mixed feelings, one of them being a sigh of gratitude to God that that vigil is over and another thought being that of misgiving when I think of all that will be involved in getting things into proper order in the former residence so close to home. Add to this the usual hurly-burly of daily living, not to mention the demands on one's energies down town and I marvel that things turn as well as they do. My constant hope is that things will be taken as slowly as possible although I realize the pressures will continue unabated for a while at least.

In regard to the mention of the Crockett lady, I can only report that I have had no further news from that quarter. I have sent along a couple of letters, the last one addressed to the home address on the assumption that the lady has already returned from her stay at Lufkin. Under ordinary circumstances she would have been back home by this late date, what with the tendency of modern medical practice to get people up and stirring within a couple of days after such an operation according to information conveyed by local physicians.

I was thinking that in her last letter, Kay had said something about being back in Hatchitoches on the 23rd or 24th and accordingly I was mildly



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surprised today when James appeared around 11 o'clock and remained for dinner. I asked about the wife and he said he always looks for her when she puts in an appearance and never on a date mentioned in letters regarding her intentions. He mentioned receiving a letter from Claiter, publisher of the photographic book, enclosing a letter from a lady who had bought the "Shadows of Old New Orleans" and who took the trouble to write to Claiter to say she thought it a perfectly lovely book. I take it it gave the publisher great satisfaction in passing along this letter which merely struck us as an example of what people may think about a piece of merchandise, regardless of its actual condition. I reckon I shall be having sensations of wonderment when, if the disc ever goes on the market, somebody will write about satisfaction with the thing.

I guess it was Tuesday of last week that James was here and we were both surprised to find Sister in the big house when we went over to dinner. We were not quite so dismayed but not too pleased today when, on going over to dinner we encountered, not Sister, but Dootsie-Baby. But although larger physically than her mama and without her mama's constant determination to keep the pot boiling over, nevertheless, Dootsie-Baby is far from being a social star but everything went along smoothly although dully enough.

The letter from Leigh Barron of Denver mentioned Freddie Grophey or however that composer signs his last name. I hadn't heard it mentioned in such a long time although I remember clearly enough how popular his "Grand Canyon suite" used to be how often one used to hear it on the radio. I shall respond to the Barron letter, congratulating him on his intention to indulge in a California vacation and recommending to him the Virgil Thompson by Virgil Thompson, assuring as I do that L. Barron, esquire, being a remarkable musician, may well be acquainted with Virgil Thompson personally and most certainly some of the Thompson compositions.

I find myself ravenishly hungry and accordingly am about to cast about in the icebox to discover what tidbit I may discover there I pray the weather is as pretty in Lyme as it is locally and that little Miss Lee is constantly practicing slow motion.....

11621

15310

Thursday, January 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with the thermometer at 37 this morning, 63 this afternoon.

I feel quite elated over the success we are having in persuading the blackbirds and grackles to take up roosting quarters elsewhere. The grandiflora magnolia in front of Yucca remains void of the feathered host and the goldfinch swim merrily on. Within the last few days new swarms of birds began taking over one of the grandiflora's on the opposite side of Yucca. As in former efforts on the other side of the house, I have been making strange noises on this new position on the white garden side but it got me nowhere for after going through the accustomed antics to frighten the birds off, they would settle right back in the same places as soon as my back was turned. And so this afternoon I asked myself why I didn't introduce a bit of new scenery in that quarter. And so I placed a generous sized armchair not far from the tree, placing on the arms a board six feet long and a foot wide, covering same with newspapers which would show up plainly enough in the gloom when the birds began winging their way in from the fields. To my delight and mild surprise, the trick worked, even as it has been working on the other side of the house. During the past three hours, I have been stepping out onto the back gallery to find that there are no birds there at all. Early this morning I was tuned in on a radio program that reported the manifold difficulties several cities around the country are having with birds. Even as was the case with me, the City Fathers in those cities are still in the dark about how the trick can be turned, never dreaming, I suppose, even as I never dreamed, that the problem could be solved so simply.

I have just moved the armchair with its board covered with newspapers back onto the gallery. Tomorrow night just before dark, I shall set it out again, hoping the while that this bit of legerdemain will continue working the balance of the seasons of the moment, so much for the birds.

Mrs. Walker called me at news time last night. she mentioned



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the graduating exercises at Northwestern at 8:30 Thursday night. She asked me if I thought Thelma and John would be attending explaining that on Thursday night after the degrees had been awarded, she thought she might give a champagne supper at her apartment and would like to have the Kyser attend but was hesitant about inviting them by 'phone if they did not plan to attend the festivities at the college. I told her I would let her know in the morning. And so I called Thelma this morning, asking how John had made out on Tuesday at his Shreveport speech, touched on several points of mutual interest whereupon Thelma asked me if I planned to attend the graduation exercises tonight at Northwestern. She said she and John had thought about going because of Ursula but weren't sure if they would go or not. That was all I wanted to know for it was certainly adequate to enable Mrs. Walker to 'phone her invitation and so, as Thelma might coin a phrase, "that was that". By now, --10:30, the champagne party must be in full swing and I hold the thought that everybody is just what he wants to be even as am I, --behind the birdless grandifloras.

I am holding the thought that in spite of all the demands on little Miss Lee's time these days, she has found an opportunity to gallop through this week's issue of Life magazine. The pictures I have especially in mind are those in the several pages devoted to "Grand Dames of America" or some such title. I hadn't seen a picture of Althea Roosevelt Longworth in such a long time. I was glad to run across her in this collection of portraits. I was also glad to see Mrs. Edgar B. Stearn's picture which struck me as being as pleasant a composition as any reproduced.

I was amused at the anxiousness of Mrs. Youngblood to obtain a copy of one or another of my books of poetry. I am wondering where she got the idea I had published anything of the sort. Oddly enough there were two telephone calls, one from Dallas and one from Beaumont, coming through today when I was wading through the Youngblood epistle, each 'phone call asking me where copies of the collected copies of Plantation Memo could be obtained, each speaker explaining they had been mentioned on the air as being on the market. That's the trouble with so much 'hear on radio, believing or comprehending so little as I do.

I spent most of the day trimming crepe myrtles and Chincherries and find myself both hungry and sleepy. Hence I turn toward the icebox and thence to my downy pillow.....

01831

15312

Friday, January 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 40 - 60 range.

I have had only one report from last night's graduation festivities, --Mrs. Walker. She said things went off pleasantly enough although there was at least one minor episode that demonstrated how long it takes some racially conscious students to catch up with the times. It seems that the graduate students were seated in two sections on either side of an aisle. When it came time for the diploma to be presented to the individual graduates, the students were to arise from their seats, marching to the podium two by two, with a student from one side of the aisle stepping out into the aisle to join a student from the opposite side of the aisle and thus proceed forward. Mrs. Walker said that in her group she chanced to be placed next to a colored gentleman named Baptiste who was to receive his Master's degree. He sat in the seat on the aisle and when he stood up and stepped out into the aisle, a white girl on the opposite side of the aisle stepped out according to the plan but on catching sight of a person of color next to whom she was supposed to walk, she lagged about four paces behind him which, of course, through all the ones following her out of line of march. Another way of putting it might be to say that the line ahead proceeded two by two until Baptiste came along, the marcher with him having fallen back so that he walked alone and all the rest of the line behind. Baptiste was thrown out of kilter and into mild disarray but, except for the inconvenience for everyone in the procession, everything went off smoothly enough.

After the exercises were over, Mrs. Walker had a few people to her apartment including the Kyser, the Johnny Mackers, Mrs. Walker's cousin from Shreveport and so on and everyone seems to have had a fine time. I shall be hearing a report from Thelma in a day or two, I suppose, although she will be able to report only about the party as she and John did not attend the graduation exercises.

J. H. got back from his jaunt to New Mexico and appeared as full of vim and vigor as usual. He mentioned



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several plans for traveling during February with the same casualness that he always displays when contemplating outings.

In today's post there was a letter from Dr. Dorman which I found quite diverting. She started off with a blast at me for having written what I did about "New Neighbors", the raccoons. Carrie says raccoons are darling animals and she thought it awful that I had invited people to come and trap them. I think I shall use the letter as a peg on which to hang a column, reproducing it in its entirety. She must have eased her distress on the fact that I had said that formerly one had to go to the woods to hunt raccoons but now all people had to do was to walk across the road and hang away.

There was a letter from Charleston in today's post, too. I shall enclose it herewith. It has been my understanding for some time that all properties had been transferred some time back to the niece and accordingly I had not supposed there would be any bequests by the aunt other than such possessions as furniture, pictures, or a brace and the like.

My 9 o'clock coffee companion expressed surprise over the demi-tasses today for it seems she had just learned that Lestan was scheduled to harangue the Hysterical Ladies on the 24th or whenever of the coming month. During the day there have been a few calls from various members of the organization expressing pleasure at the prospect of seeing me in town on that date. From all this, I conclude there must have been something in the paper about it. It is my understanding that the thing is to be held in one of the larger halls at the college, quite possibly the same building in which Lestan gave a song and dance at a Chamber of Commerce dinner a dozen years ago. If memory serves, there's a public address system operating in that place which will be of help in carrying the voice to all parts of the hall accommodating several hundred diners.

My agents report that cousin Arthur seems to have arrangements pretty much in his hands for this year's Chamber of Commerce dinner which is just another way of saying that nominations for this year's award are pretty much out and dried.

Many more blossoms appeared today on the Chinese magnolia trees suggesting even as does the thermometer that Spring is on the way. At this time of the year every promise of the approach of Primavera is always so welcome. And now I fold, holding the thought there may be moments of rest this weekend in Lyme.....

12312

15314

Sunday, January 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, humid and mild, the thermometer revolving around the 60 degree mark.

Any day that gets going with a laugh is bound to have its points. Today was one of those for me, what with scuffling and laughing for a straight half hour this morning. My intention was to don some fresh K Kikki pants, just in from the laundry on the Saturday go-round. There doesn't seem to be anything particularly hilarious about crawling into a fresh pair of pants and, come to think of it, what amused me in the operation was the fact that I couldn't get into them. Apparently instead of using starch on the garment, the laundry used glue. One thing is certain, no starch ever had the stick-tuteness that the pants demonstrated. First I tried pushing my toe into one leg of the trousers, getting no where fast. Then I tried running my hand through the leg of the thing, starting at the cuff at the bottom which equally got me no where, but no where at all then I tried prying open the things grasping the seams at the knee and trying to separate the tight lengths, the one from the other but not making a dent. The garment was comparatively new, having been to the laundry only once before but even so, the tightness with which the cloth was joined was such that I expected to tear through the fabric by too persistent prying. Finally I sagged into a chair, attacking the problem in a less haphazard fashion, inching a pair of shears inside the legs along the seam. After 45 minutes of such endeavor, I finally succeeded in getting first one leg through and then the other. Even so, however, the opening thus wrought was only an opening and the creases, front and back were perfectly rigid. When I finally got the balance of my raiment on and had gone over to the African House to feed the peacocks, I caught sight of the pants reflected in the mirror where the peacocks stand for hours seeing if their hats are on straight. I don't know about the peacocks' hats this morning but in the glass my pants put me in mind of those funny looking chickens that have feathers running all the way down their legs to the ground and always looking mighty untidy.

During the morning I enlisted the assistance of an occasional slave passing this way, all of whom got no where in their efforts to bring the legs around to normal. At noon



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I pointed them out to J. H. who leaned over and tried to tug them apart but gave up declaring that they were stuck together with glue. That's what I thought. Why I had not cast them aside in the beginning and put on another, less rigid pair, I don't know. It's the first time in my life I ever did so much panting over pants and tonight they are still looking like a pair of frizzled chickens.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned yesterday noon to ask if she and Clara Genung might come down in the afternoon. They might. They brought some Taylor port, a gift from Margaret Dixon and they brought some egg-nog which was equally wonderful. There were lots of narcissus in flower and Mrs. Walker asked if she might pluck a bouquet. While she was doing so Mrs. Genung and I pluck a nice bouquet of Chinese magnolia blossoms so that when the ladies got ready to leave half an hour later, they seemed to be seated within a tower. Clara Genung made the most of the distance between her and me on the one hand and more widely prowling daughter on the other, Clara asking me to hold the thought that her daughter might get a teaching job somewhere not too far away. Apparently Puerto Rico is out of the window and equally so any thought of associating herself with the local paper. In my opinion, Mrs. Walker would do best to join some newspaper staff, she is such a wiz in that field. Her personality is such that she seldom gets along too well in her personal contacts which would seem to let out much thought of associating herself with any educational project. But whatever may be her choice, it is definitely her choice to make and so I shall keep strictly out of the matter of making so much as the vaguest suggestion.

Saturday's post was short. Frankly, I had expected to have some kind of a letter from somebody connected with the record matter but there was nothing from that quarter. I have written five letters in the last 10 days asking for particulars, date of release and various other things but to date I haven't had so much as an invoice or any statement as to the availability of the item. In recent months I have heard people complaining that they have found it impossible to get answers to business letters from any place in the United States so I guess this minor matter is not unusual, merely giving me an opportunity to understand better what others have been saying.

I have a little more desk work to do tonight and after that I shall find out if I have to resort to a can opener to divest myself of my pants before folding up my beard.....

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Monday, January 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy in the mild 70's.

Yesterday there was a funeral at St. Mary's on the Bayou, -- one of the members of the negro Carpenter clan that used to occupy a whole village of houses off somewhere between Little and Red River. The reason I mention the funeral is because something occurred that was a little different from anything I had ever heard of before on occasion. The services began at 11 in the morning and proceeded in the usual manner until the moment arrived to lower the casket into the wooden box already placed in the bottom of the grave to receive the casket. At that last moment as the coffin was being lowered, it was discovered that the wooden box into which the coffin was to be lowered was smaller than the coffin itself. Naturally, this brought all proceedings to an abrupt halt. There was quite a concourse of relatives and friends and members of the community present, all of whom had come to assist at the final rites and there things were at a standstill. By dint of considerable doings, the coffin, part way down in the ground, was edged up, pulled around and hauled out and the box into which it was to have been lowered, examined.

It was unthinkable that the coffin should have been placed in the ground without its protective wooden box and to all present it was unthinkable that anyone should leave the graveyard until the services had been completed properly. It was evident to everyone that the mortician had made a blunder in sending too small a wooden box to receive the coffin and the mortician's place of business was miles away in Winnfield. Instead of hunting up a telephone, -- and there probably wasn't one in the Little River area, a couple of Carpenters present took off by car to Winnfield where a box of adequate measurements was rounded up and brought back to St. Mary's-on-the-Bayou. Then the coffin was lowered into the grave, replacing the first one, the coffin was lowered, the grave filled in and all the mourners departed -- at long last, -- the hour being 5 p.m. As funerals go, I suppose this involved more time than for those of my Carpenter heretofore and at least two of the mourners confided to me that, for a single burial, the time required and consumed at this one was more than they had bargained for. One can readily sympathize with the mourners, all of whom had expected to be home by noon and some of whom had gone to the funeral without having had any breakfast. Said one of my informants: "Next time this happen, we's goin' to rig up a snack-bar."



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Today's post brought a letter from Crockett which I got a chance to read in part only, what with one kind of interruption and another. In the beginning of the note, mentioned was made of a letter from me, dated January 14th, and received on the 23rd which sounds like leisurely going in this jet age. As no mention was made of an earlier letter, addressed to the hospital on the day I received the Spinks letter regarding the impending operation would appear that never got through at all. So few letters are ever lost, one may assume that eventually it may reach its destination eventually.

On last Saturday when Mesdames Walerk and Genung passed this way, nothing was said about impending plans on Mrs. Walker's part. This morning however, when speaking with Frau Genung on the phone, I learned her daughter was at school, registering for the Spring semester so I take it a pursuit of education will continue in the formal style. Also from La Genung, I learned that the Walker boy has changed his mind about matriculating at M. I. T. following his graduation from High School this Spring and, instead -- and it seems to be quite a radical "instead", he will join the Marines. There appears to be two schools of thought about the better time to get one's military service behind one, either join the colors on graduating from High school and, once that service has been completed within a couple of years, start in on college. The other segment believes in going on to college and finishing up that line of endeavor and, after college graduation, going into the military pursuits. Mrs. Chopin's son is pursuing the latter course. As for myself, it would seem to me that getting all the education one can while in the general swing of things is the better course but that is only one man's opinion.

I laughed in my heart this morning when Carmen called me with a wail, saying that I had no idea how difficult life is in her neighborhood in town at the present time where, because of birds in trees all around her neighborhood, it is impossible for one to step out of doors without getting bogged down in droppings. All I can say for Carmen is that she ought to come down to the country and thereby discover how comparatively free in town she is of such problems. My neighbor across the fence is bemoaning the fact that in planning a bridge party at her home tomorrow, she cannot use any of the beautiful camellias in her garden, what with the lower-layers of droppings left nightly by the birds.

So runs a dull account of a prosaic Monday. Perhaps I may do better on the morrow.....

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Tuesday, January 30th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy in the 70's...

By the same post that takes this memo, the record also starts rolling in the direction of little Miss Lee. I had supposed that the gaps in the thing were to be tightened up and eliminated before the thing had been released but I must have been mistaken about that for a messenger from Alexandria appeared at my door this afternoon in spite of the fact that I had been advised by telephone from that quarter yesterday that no delivery could be made before next week.

I have heard it said that no one can anticipate how a voice will sound in the various media such as sound track, broadcast, wax recordings and so on. I always remember how odd it was and still is that the roar of a lion, caught on a sound track, registers almost exactly the sound of the squeaking of a mouse. About the last 2 or 3 minutes at the end of the side 2 of the thing, the voice seems to take on a semblance of the speaker which is a little late in the proceedings.

Perhaps it should be remembered, too, that when originally recorded, the purpose of the tape was for use in the History Department of L. S. U. and the two things requested was the including of many dates for this verbal document and secondly, that the speaking should be sufficiently slow as to enable the students to jot down notes, especially of dates, both factors, of course, making the finished thing definitely on the dull side when, as happened, the thing was pressed into service as a commercial item.

So much by way of excuses but I must say I assume the delivery could have been smoother and the speaker been able to refer to notes and had there been a timepiece present to relieve the strain of wondering how the stuff was being spaced so that it would not run over the time allowed for this sort of disc.

To me it seems unbelievable that the various tape recordings, once spliced and joined together, should not have been submitted to me for checking. The failure to this resulted in one hilarious error as you will note wherein one single word was omitted, nephew. This omission automatically makes Harriet Beecher Stowe a bigamist in a manner of speaking.



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The line should state that "Harriet Beecher Stowe, wife of Robert McAlpin's nephew" but the nephew is out of it so that the voice seems to be saying that "Harriet Beecher Stowe, wife of Robert McAlpin. Smile."

I got a disc to put in the mail for Natalie so she can fiddle with it a little prior to the hysterical Ladies' luncheon when it will fall to her to see to it that the part about Yucca may be blasted over the public address system at some appropriate time during the formal song and dance act. If, at some future time, you feel auntie would get anything out of such a disc, I shall be glad to send one along to little Miss Lee. I believe, however that it might be well to think twice before rolling one in her direction, what with the possibility of one person or another chancing to come upon it, should they pass in her direction.

I heard on the radio this evening that at 10 o'clock tonight TV will broadcast the "unveiling" of Ford's Theatre in Washington. I assume this should be an interesting broadcast, not only in the presentation of the theatre itself but also the appearance of the silk-stocking audience which, I should imagine, should include many an interesting personality in the political and social whirl of the Capitol.

I sampled the radio's air waves but could find no program covering the event. Perhaps this weekend one network or another may give some highlights in a summation of News of the Week or some such effort.

I. S. Willard 'phoned this afternoon. She wanted to tell me about a delightful telephone conversation she had had yesterday with her son. I believe it was Sunday he flew over with some business associates from Germany. --I forget the name of the Capitol, to spend a day in St. Louis, giving him time while in Missouri to 'phone his mama and then fly back this afternoon which seems like a heap of traveling for such a brief stay..

So this is turn and although I am not particularly hungry, I think I shall sample a dab of pimento cheese spread on crackers and then fold up my beard in hopes of catching up with some delayed broadcast about the Ford Theatre doings....

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Wednesday, January 31st, 1968.

Memorandum:

A delicious day, airy to partly cloudy in the upper 70's.

I continue holding the thought that little Miss Lee may have had the good luck to witness last night's TV presentation of the dedication of Washington's refurbished Ford's theatre.

I have heard but a single report about the doings and that was from Mrs. Chopin who called me this morning to say it was one of the finest TV presentations she had ever witnessed.

Niether last night nor at any time today did I hear any newscast that mentioned the event. Let's hope Life will give it large space in one of its earliest issues. Mrs. Chopin reported that although the President had expected to attend the festivities, he was prevented from appearing and that accordingly the Vice President and his lady were there to represent the Johnsons. I was glad to hear that Helen Hayes participated in the ceremonies. When one considers the tremendous changes going on in Washington during the past 102 years, it seems remarkable that this old theatre should have escaped destruction and has been elevated to the status of Historical Monument in a city filled with such souvenirs.

Mrs. Charlest Wagner of Hatchitoches, Clovia Wagner, widow of Mrs. Wagner's son and some other lady from somewhere appeared on my gallery unannounced this afternoon. They had attempted to reach me by 'phone but failing that, they had called the store which promised to pass along the message of their impending visit but, as so often happens, forgot.

We talked of many things, not the least of which turned on yesterday's column, --Twelve Years a Slave. Mrs. Wagner who once catalogued the Melrose library, told me she remembered that volume as being in the catalogue. Mention of the re-issuing of the Northrup book by L. S. U. Press brought us around to L. S. U and Louisiana Heritage Association sponsoring the disc, A Visit to Melrose. Having the record to hand, I showed it to them and of course all three of them had to acquire ownership of discs for themselves forthwith. That makes me think I had



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better knock off a column about the new disc before long. Perhaps a good title for the piece might be "Just For The Record".

I ran into an incredible tale today about the domestic floundering in one local cabin. I may have mentioned that Morel has been playing the role of "kelper" to the wife of Morel's uncle who is doing a long stretch in prison. Both Morel and his auntie, seem to be crazy about each other but the family hearth is said to be in a perpetual uproar, Morel being said to incline toward roughness in his treatment of the lady and her five or six children. A week ago she borrowed twenty dollars from somebody and took a bus to Baton Rouge to visit her mama, taking the children with her. A few days later, Morel spent 28 dollars on car and bus fare to go to Baton Rouge to urge his auntie to return with her children. Today, it was said, Morel received a letter from his auntie, saying she didn't feel like using a bus or train to return home, telling him to hire somebody to drive him to Baton Rouge to pick her and the children up and bring them back. It is estimated that would cost about fifty dollars. When auntie's husband went to prison, his wife and children were put on the welfare list but they all got taken off pretty soon when it was learned that Morel was hiding with them in the role of "helper". Morel is said to be bogged down hopelessly in debt because of brushes with the law in various henkey-tonk escapades. In short, everybody in the mix-up isn't only broke but in debt beyond much hope of getting back to some kind of a financial balance and the lady orders Morel to procure a car and driver to bring her back home because she doesn't care to ride on a train or bus. Merily, that old, old adage applies in this case, --You don't have to be but it helps out a lot if you are crazy.

I wish all the blackbirds had taken off for some place as far away as Baton Rouge but they haven't. Nevertheless there is much to be grateful about in that hundreds of thousands of them have shifted their roosting places in the bamboo hedges and magnolia trees, betaking themselves to the big oak in the front garden and adjacent trees in that area. I should like to know the cause but am no complaining about the result of their decision so far as Yuca is concerned. And now for a slab of pound cake and a glass of chocolate milk and thence to work.....

15322

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Thursday, February 1st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Drizzle all day with the thermometer in the upper 60's. Setrm-warnings from 5 to 10 o'clock this evening speak of a line of thunder storms northwest of Alexandria and traveling southeastward accompanied by high winds and hail. Being on the edge of the pathway, we received only rain without the boisterous winds and ice pellets.

The promise for the morrow, Ground Hog Day, is sunshine so in this locality, at least, the little fellow will no doubt see his shadow so that Spring will be delayed until March 21st before it breaks through, thereby surprising nobody including the calendar maker.

The weather reduced the plantation working force considerably to which is just another way of saying that games of chance were the order of the day. This is the season when "crack-a-lou", like the seasonal inclination of youngsters for playing pool, means they aren't sinning since it is invariably the losses that are bemoaned, if, indeed, bemoaning is the word since gambling, win or lose, is usually taken philosophically enough.

The grown up style most of their gambling as "bingo" in the ladies' section. Mrs. Chopin reported that she and Frances Phelps attended a Catholic Daughters or an Elksbingo game last night, both returning home \$2.50 or \$5.00 richer.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned last night to read me something from some book she is studying this semestre. She hasn't mentioned anything about her matriculation this term, laboring under the impression, I suppose, that I know all about it which I do but



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she doesn't know that I do. The fact is that she is doing some studying toward degrees for a doctorate but whether that is merely filling in time until her son graduates from High School in May or June or, on the other hand, if she has really embarked on a course the terminus will indeed be the doctorate, and far be it from me to inquire.

Mrs. Walker reported that Esther Lape had sent a book for Mrs. Walker to read to me on occasion over the phone. I don't recall either the title or the author but it seems to me she said the author's name was Painter or some such and the title of the book some thing to do with little Marcel's writing years. I guess little Marcel did considerable in making notebook entries as early as 1903 or '04 but Du Cote de Chez Swann didn't really get under way for nearly 10 years after that. Well, eventually we shall see what we shall see.

I. S. Willard 'phoned just as I was going to dinner this noon. She wanted to ask if Kay might be in Matchitoches. Neither she nor I feel inclined to call the house, feeling that in view of the strange hours Kay keeps, we might succeed in dialing at the wrong hour. I assume Kay may be back but don't know. I had hoped James might come down one day this week so that I might get him to change this typewriter ribbon for me but I haven't seen or heard from him.

I enjoyed a little chat with John Kyser this morning when he called to inquire when the Chinese magnolias would be at their peak of perfection for photographing. The answer to that question is in the lap of the botanical Gods and they won't tell. Some of the trees right now are filled to capacity with opened flowers. Others haven't even begun to remove their caps while others are just beginning to put out a few blossoms at the very top. With tonight's rain there will be thousands of petals on the grass ere dawning. John says he has quite a few pictures of the local floral parade but would like to get some additional shots. I suggested that he come down now and then return again within two or three weeks, depending on how the thermometer behaves within the next few weeks.

interruption.....

Mrs. Eakin of Bunkie just called. She wanted to chat a little about making other records and asked me if I had any ideas. I said I had but would not go into details. She said she would call again. I said I would be glad to talk to her when she called. I said I would be glad to talk to her when she called. I said I would be glad to talk to her when she called.

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Friday, February 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

The skies clear during the night and so the old Ground Hog had the pleasure of viewing his shadow all day long. A chill wind out of the North kept the thermometer down in the 50's and tonight it will sag to 30, it is said so the blossoms of the Chinese magnolias may thank the aforesaid Ground Hog if they get nipped tonight.

I had August to lend me a hand this morning. After yesterday's rain the ground was a bit damp and so we turned to housecleaning instead of outdoor work just to get things going. I decided it was a fine time to polish up some furniture, too, and when that was done, I opened all the windows as well as the doors to let the brisk, chilly breeze waft away some of the furniture polish aroma. Just when things were pleasantly chill, people came. It was Gerden and B. Randolph from Kateland Plantation over in the Celfax area, bringing with them the parents of their son's wife and it was all very pleasant but definitely hurly-burly, what with the pressure of time and the chill in the North wind.

Bee, --the lady who had the baby, brought me one of her grand home made bread specialties which I am going to attack later tonight. The new disc was lying on a footstool and Bee, catching sight of it asked if she might have four. She might, one result being that I have no more as of the moment.

It was scarcely necessary for me to mention that I waited no longer for James to appear to change the typewriter ribbon. I have a lot of work to do on or with the aid of this machine this weekend and so I thought I might as well test the thing to the store to get a ribbon replacement. I haven't always had success with such a major operation at the store but thus far the thing is working alright. I mention the transaction, however, by way of explanation as to what might happen, should the thing fail to reverse and thpy suddenly comes to a fade-out.

In the matter of the big sugar cauldron, what I had feared happened this morning in that I discovered, thanks to the droppings from the birds, the goldfish all turned up their toes. And so, as soon as the Randolphs and all departed, August and I undertook draining the cauldron of it hundreds of gallons of water, not to mention its dead fish. Once emptied, the pot got a thorough scrubbing and a re-fill. replacing the water takes hours but we



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got the job done before sundown.

I. S. Willard called this noon to ask me about some historical point. When we had finished with that, she mentioned that Kay is back. I. S. W. volunteered the information that she had talked with Kay on the phone and that Kay mentioned that after a little vacation, Mrs. Crabtree would be coming over to Hatchiteches, supposedly playing the same role to Kay as she had played so long for Aunt Willie. How this will work out remains to be seen. Kay has said more than once to me that if anything ever called Aunt "illie away, she would like to have Mrs. Crabtree come here to be her companion. At the time it seemed to me I sensed that James did not seem very enthusiastic about the prospect. Perhaps that was because 406 is not a large house. Advantages and disadvantages are apparent enough and Time, of course, will spell out how the new arrangement works out. There was a letter from Ky in today's post but the handwriting was too much for my secretary. I assume she was simply announcing her return home but I shall hear more about that if a mere gifted secretary passes this way on the morrow.

Today's radio offered up a direct quote from a statement made by the Governor of Louisiana. Somehow the words captured my imagination and, for all I know, I may, sooner or later, make use of the quotation. The topic had to do with recent labor troubles in Baton Rouge and Governor McKeithin opined that "if people knew about some of the things that went on in such groups their hair would stand up straight on the end of their head". Since the days of Oliver Cromwell, people seem to have accepted the general statement that peoples' heads are round, leaving one to conjecture just where one might determine where the end of a man's head might be located.

And now for a slice of Bee's homemade bread and a saucer of fig preserves and cream and that will be it for today. I am holding the thought little Miss Lee may find a moment of rest and relaxation throughout the impending weekend.....

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15326

Sunday, February 4th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 50's, grand sunshine by day, entrancing moonlight by night.

Two young gentlemen from Northwestern came to see me today bearing gifts from Dr. Dillinger of the University of Arkansas. There is no point in asking you to guess the nature of the gifts for if you enumerated a million items, you never would have guessed it, --gourds, --not one but four, no less. Dr. Dillinger has been here and accordingly know I have a gourd or two and perhaps that is what inspired him to send the Arkansas ones, by a University of Arkansas student living in Hatchiteches who had come home for the mid term vacation. One of the gourds is about twice the size of a basketball while the other three are much smaller and, so far as I can make out, of no particular interest. I put the items in the house until my guests departed and then placed them with the other gourds on the front gallery, remarking to myself that old saying:

"Him what have, gits".

On Saturday morning I cooked up a fine but brief story about the new record, calling Mrs. Chopin, asking her as President of the Louisiana Press Women's Association if she, --asking her if she wished a story that might pay her something from the cash boxes of the major Louisiana papers and some outside the State. She said she was all in favor of it. The opening sentence ran something like this:

"The first record in a new phonographic disc series, each disc devoted to a famous old plantation, has just been recorded by Leston for the Louisiana Heritage Association."

The next paragraph started off with the title of the record, followed by another sentence giving some notion as to the personalities it touched upon, --Marie Therese, the original grantee, Mrs. Cammie G. Henry, patroness of the Arts and Clementine Hunter, the painter of primitives. I figures one or two of these three names, especially the latter, might strike a responsive chord somewhere along the line. The next paragraph had something to say about the record itself being accidentally arrived following the taping of the story, originally intended for tape only for educational purposes.



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I suggested the news item be held for Monday publication so it wouldn't be so likely to get lost in the full Sunday editions and recommended that it also be filed with the two major wire services. Individual stories were sent to all papers in Shreveport, Alexandria, Baton Rouge and New Orleans and to several major papers in cities of nearby States, Houston Chronicle, Dallas Morning News, Oklahoma City Tribune and so on. Since the story went on the wire services, too, it will quite possibly be picked up by newspapers further afield. It will be interesting to see what reaction such coverage will bring forth. In the mean time, the Louisiana Heritage Association may count itself lucky for thousands of dollars of free advertisement but I doubt if that organization has much concept of the value in the advertising field that is better than advertising since it masquerades under a mere news story.

Verily, it's an ill wind that doesn't blow somebody some good, what with Mrs. Chopin being paid by the newspapers for her story, Louisiana Heritage being given a publicity gratis and Leston being the recipient, no doubt, of plenty of letters from former pilgrims writing to say they remember their visit here.

Thelma and John came down this afternoon. Thelma had called me Saturday to ask if the Chinese magnolias were in a photograph condition and said she and John would make a round today about 2. They arrived promptly at 4:30 having been detained by a visit from A. A. Frederick, one time President of Northwestern. There were shadows on many of the floral displays and so John will return one morning this week.

Quite by chance I learned from two people in town that they had sent me notes on Thursday, neither of which came in either Friday's or Saturday's post. Oddly enough there was no 1st class mail at all on Saturday and thus I shall brace myself against a double dip on the arrival of tomorrow's post. There seems to be a new arrangement about out-going mail from town much of which seems to be hauled by trucks with the sacks of out-going mail toward the South hauled non-stop to Alexandria where it is re-sorted so that communities lying between Natchitoches and Alexandria as well as mail from any place to the North, East or West, is held up in delivery for an extra day or two as the sacks sweep right through the area from terminus to terminus, gumming up deliveries wonderfully on occasion.

Thelma and John brought me a surprise package, the contents of which I am about to explore and sample, a dab of Rhine wine or Moselle, some requesfort cheese which I have sniffed without discovering as yet and that ought to go nicely with Bee Randolph's home made bread. I held the thought the Lyme larder is holds something toothsome tonight, too.....

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Monday, February 5th, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair in the 50's.

Tonight I find myself wondering where the billions of birds are roosting. Probably they are in their accustomed places, --mostly around the house across the fence. The merchant-planter had flat shiny pie tins suspended in the magnolias nearest the house, suspended by wires and hung closely enough to each other so the tins would tinkle whenever a breeze struck them. J. H. had been told by "experts", --I didn't know there were any that existed in this particular field, that such contraptions would work. Perhaps they would work if there were a breeze which there certainly isn't tonight.

Off hand it seems to me that one vital consideration was not taken into account when the tins were attached to the branches of the trees this noon. This is the fact that when a few hundred birds alight on a limb, the suspended tins are not going to be in line because of the weight on all the limbs that will make them sag. But that is for the experts to figure out and I am not in that category.

Another approach was ushered in at first dark when the birds in waves began coming in for the night. That was to have several feld hands with guns present to hangaway at the birds as they alighted on the branches. That method never has worked in other places or in the bamboo at the end of the white garden but perhaps it will work on this go-round. I haven't bothered to walk out toward the front garden to see what had been accomplished. It will be seen enough to learn what results were achieved when I'm out that way on tomorrow. All I know is that the beard I put across the big iron sugar cauldron induced the birds to move to some other sleeping place and I am still astonished that that seems to have effected the result I had not anticipated.

Last night Dr. Tom Wells 'phoned me from town saying: "My brother and his wife are here from Uruguay, South America, are here and my wife and I would like to



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bring them down tomorrow afternoon at 4:30. What do we do,"

"Don't come at 4:30," was my somewhat abrupt response, softened a little by the next suggestion that they make it at 3 o'clock. Dr. Wells said he had a class at college until 3 and so we compromised my making a 3:30 appointment. And so they came and, surprisingly enough, at 3:30.

My thought was to get rid of them by 5 o'clock so I might join J. H. and the clerk at the big house for a hot supper. I got them out by 5 o'clock alright but there was no hot supper since the cook decided to go to Shreveport to see her mother in the hospital there, recuperating from a "garter" operation. I suppose J. H. dined across the fence after the cannonading of the birds and the clerk probably ate at home in town.

As for the publicity attending the release of the record, the Alexandria Town Talk and the Shreveport Journal carried the story. I was mildly surprised that the Journal made reference to Cane River or Plantation Memo. It was to have been expected the Town Talk would do so as, indeed, it did. I haven't had any reports on other papers for these will not come to hand before Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. I should not be surprised, however, if the Times Picayune may have run the story since I received a long distance call from New Orleans this noon from somebody I never heard of, asking about the availability of the record.

I suppose I have remarked before how odd it seems that placid Cane River should seemingly claim so many more drowning victims than turbulent Red River. This evening, about dusk-dark a youth was lost hard by St. Mathews school at just about the same place where, several years ago, two men and several of their children were drowned. In tonight's accident, the youth with two of his relatives, perhaps his father and uncle or some such, was setting trout lines when Death took him. I haven't heard the details but I assume he may have fallen from one of the boats in which he was working. I suppose Thursday's paper will carry particulars.

The moon is so wonderful tonight, I'm going to take a turn in the Ghana garden for a breath of fresh air, just as though I had had nothing else all day. But ozone by moonlight is more magical than at noonday and on my return a cup of hot chocolate and a slab of angel food cake will just hit the spot.....

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Tuesday, February 6th, 1968.

Fair with lots of sunshine and moonlight, thermometer in the 40 - 60 range.

I learned something about telephone service that I never knew before. It's probably old hat to everybody but me but, just in case, it may have eluded you as it has me all these years, I share it with you. I needed the street address of somebody in Austin, Texas. I called the Hatchitoches Chamber of Commerce, thinking that organization might have an Austin 'phone book but it did not. Then came the information from that quarter which surprised me. I was told that if I would dial information in Hatchitoches, I might ask the information operator to connect me with the information operator in Austin and the correct spelling of the name being inquired about would be given and that both the street and 'phone number would be given by the Austin operator in the information department. I followed instructions, got the information from the Austin operator, --the whole business executed without any charge whatsoever. I don't suppose one would have occasion to with information operators in any cities in the United States very often but I think it is good to know the service is there without cost, should one have occasion to make use of it.

James appeared about 10:30 this morning unannounced and remained for dinner. He said that he guessed he had been wrong about the commercial value of his "Shadows of Old New Orleans" as the thing seemed to be selling in spite of his December request that the publisher withdraw it from circulation. And on the strength of his change of mind, he brought a copy for J. H. and Celeste, one for the clerk and one for Leston, the latter bearing a dedication which I haven't as yet deciphered.

Just after he arrived, Celeste 'phoned me, saying she had some friends at the house and that they wanted to buy a record, "A Visit to Melrose". She wanted to know two things, first, if she let them have her record, could I supply her with a replacement, and, second, how much did the record cost so she could collect



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then and there. When I told her it sold at six dollars, she nearly fainted being under the impression it cost about a dollar and a half. But her guests revived her quickly and they said they were taking the record with them.

Back to James. He reports that Ruth Crabtree is arriving in Natchitoches later this month. Kay has decided she wants to have a house where she can entertain and, since 1226 is currently occupied by Dr. Yvonne Phillips, Kay thinks she will look around and rent or buy another house where Mrs. Crabtree may make her home and have it large enough so Kay may have ample space to do her entertaining there instead of at 406 which she finds rather snug for entertaining. Already possessed of two houses, she is going to have a third and that is that.

Once more tonight there is a considerable commotion still echoing from across the fence where the assault on the birds disquiets the aviary section in the magnolia and live oaks. What, if anything, is being accomplished is anybody's guess. The moon rides high over head providing ample light for the winged visitors to fly off and select other dormitories if they please. But, as other communities across the nation have discovered to their sorrow, birds are hard-headed and once they have decided on some likely spot for roosting, it takes more persistency than a volley of shotgun blasts to persuade them to change their minds.

About 5 o'clock it is evening, August went to the big house to light the gas heater in the dining room to take the chill out of the room before supper. The gas didn't light in spite of all the fiddling he did with the valve. He communicated the fact to me and I sent him jumping to the store to report that the gas supply had played out, hoping to get the tanks refueled before night for Yucca is on the same system. Fortunately I checked on the heater, only to discover that August had left it turned on full tilt instead of leaving it turned off as he had supposed. Within 20 minutes the fuel man put in an appearance and normal heat restored.

Among today's visitors was a couple from Columbus, Ohio who were quite delightful, both husband and wife. I mentioned the name of James Thurber and both smiled to hear the name of a family with whom they were acquainted. All this reminded me of the Thurber opus, "Years With Ross" and I told myself I must skim through parts of that book again before long.

And now for a raid on the icebox and that will be it for tonight.....

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15332

Wednesday, February 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Clear on the air-ish side. I guess it as the 20 mile an hour wind that blew steadily out of the northwest that chilled things so thoroughly all day. The thermometer remained in the 40's. Tonight the breeze has died down and the weather man says it will drop into the 20's tonight. Off hand it would seem as though that ought to take care of the Chinese magnolia blossoms currently bucking winter.

Celeste speedily ran through the enclose note to her while she and I were busy over the demi-tasses. I am not sure I understood it properly but I gather Kay plans to remove the treasures from The Bluff, have that 1790 house torn down and create a memorial garden around and about for Aunt Willie and Uncle Albert. It would seem to me the house and its treasures, if somebody wants to undertake a memorial, would be the finest memorial possible. After all, it was the Stormhome and contained their furniture. Houses of the seventeen nineties don't grow on every bush although anybody with the money could create a modern memorial garden. But it might as well be admitted that there's no accounting for the way people think -- or don't think -- and since The Bluff is private property and belongs to Kay, I reckon she can do anything with it she pleases. It seems especially striking that a member of Museum Contents, Inc., as Kay is, should rush into destroying a colonial house with one hand while making plans to create a garden on its site.

Daisy Prudhomme, daughter, I guess of the late Reginald Prudhomme of the Bermuda area, called me tonight. I guess we have never met. At least I don't remember the voice. I think she has something to do with Northwestern. She said she had called Celeste to see about a tour and Celeste had referred her to me. About 7 or 80 musicians from around the country are converging on Northwestern or some kind of a pow-wow a week hence and somebody thought it would be just darling if they could be brought to Melrose for an



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Well, of all people to have called just as I was turning  
this page, --Kay.

But to finish the thing about Daisy and her magical  
musicians. I said in a measure of truth that the birds had  
made the place to looking in appeal that I thought  
we would do well to put off any attempt at touring between  
now and the spring rains. What was more, the only date the  
musicians could come would be on a Saturday and no Saturday  
is good for pilgrims at this bend of the river. But  
Daisy was very gracious about accepting my negative response  
and so, just to smooth things a little, I asked her  
if she herself ever gets down this way. She said she does but  
had never stopped and so I told her to crank up her car one of  
these days and see to it that not more than one or two  
of her relatives jumped in it before she could get the  
door closed and that she and I could have a go at Cane River  
life if she would drop in at Yuca. From her giggle  
I concluded that this invitation pleased her and so I suppose  
I shall be finding Daisy on my lap one of these days, --Daisy with  
pilgrims, and that will be better than people fiddling around.

And now back to Kay. She called to thank me for  
the record I had given her and James yesterday. We  
immediately fell into talk about Aunt Willie's death  
and she volunteered the information that she herself had  
not been disturbed by the event since she had long realized  
that after reaching her mid 90's, Aunt Willie couldn't be  
expected to linger on much longer. She spoke of the Bluff  
and the arrangements she was making to have the contents  
removed which made a perfect opening for me to express  
the hope that, although untenanted, I thought it  
would make a wonderful memorial to her aunt and  
uncle which seemed to give her quite a turn. I  
hope the idea catches and takes added strength before  
the demolition begins. She talked about  
yearning to go to Wisconsin or some place to enjoy the  
snow but said she wanted to do several things before that such  
as coming down to read some animal stories to me, etc., etc.

At supper I learned there were no more birds around  
but an hour or so later I heard a great deal of banging  
away in the direction of the front garden and a cross the  
fence so perhaps there are even less than none by now.

And now for a nice big piece of homemade pumpkin pie  
and a glass of milk and thence to my downy pillow.....

15334

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Thursday, February 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, the thermometer sliding down to  
24 last night while Jack Frost made a mess of the magnolia  
blossoms. It warmed into the 50's today but is going back  
into the 20's tonight under a splendid moon.

It goes without saying I was enchanted to discover Tues-  
day's letter from Lyme in today's post. It is equally under-  
standable that I almost fell out of my chair when I read the  
name in the clipping about the widow lady who died in the Bronx, --  
and of all the combinations I ever heard, this one  
of little Miss Lee and Leston takes the cake. Really, that beats  
anything I ever heard and I'm sure lots of people with whom it  
might be shared would heartily agree. I have heard  
of unique combinations which calculators state could happen  
only once in some many billion times and this strikes as me  
as in that category.

In the matter of correspondence, I find it so noble  
that Tuesday's letter should have been written and I appreci-  
ate it with all my heart. But again I urge little Miss Lee not  
to attempt undertaking such efforts until after the present  
stresses and strains are a thing of the past. No good news  
justifies transmission under such conditions and I  
shall continue holding the thought that little Miss Lee will practice  
the art of conserving energies until calmer seas are  
returned. Every ounce of strength that can be saved at the  
moment is of price beyond measure and during the interim which  
would seem like silence to others will be utilized by those concerned  
to keep in contact with and by mental telepathy until a breath-  
ing space rolls 'round, as it certainly will, when other  
means of communing is more readily to hand.

It seems to me I have heard it said that only a fool  
never changes his mind and James is no fool. For ex-  
ample, in today's post came a letter saying he had changed  
his mind about trying to discourage the sale of "Shadows  
of Old New Orleans" and asking me to go ahead with my  
proposal, made sometime prior to Christmas, in which  
I offered to feature his book in a column of my own.  
I wrote the column and made copies to send to various people



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in the newspaper field, thinking to give the volume a maximum of publicity. When the book came out and he expressed himself so strongly against its circulation, I chucked the column I had written and all the letters I had penned, accepting as useless the gestures I had proposed. I wished I had saved both the column and the letters. But I can attempt something along the same lines again although it will of course be lacking in any zest on this second go-round.

I can't imagine what happened to a couple of letters I posted on February 3rd to Alexandria and to Bunkie, a few miles further south. The letter received today from Mrs. Eaton or Eakin, undated but cancelled on the 7th, makes no reference to several points I touched upon in my letter to her on the 3rd, indicating she had not received it when she posted her reply. I had also written Louisiana Heritage on the same day, the 3rd, asking for an immediate response and receiving none until this afternoon when Heritage phoned me to say that my letter, dated and cancelled on the 3rd, had just reached its destination.

Mrs. Eakin's idea about doing a photographic record on Dr. Dorman is excellent and dove-tails with an idea of my own. Getting such material on to a record would take considerable doings but I think I could set up the project if work on the thing can be narrowed down to a certain time, convenient alike to Dr. Dorman and the producers of the films and recordings.

One thing I haven't mentioned to anyone as yet is my own wish to try my hand at doing a record under some such title as "A Visit to Shadows on the Teahs. If proper arrangements for sales could be made with the Foundation in Washington, it seems to me such a disc should sell daily at the Shadows gift shop, year in and year out. I also have in mind making use of two tapes in the Western library, both on Miss Cam, one by Miss Dorman and the other by Leston, using the one recording on one side, the other on the other, wrapping them up with an appropriate introduction under some catching title about a famous plantation mistress by those who knew her best. I shall withhold both of these ideas for a little while to see how things turn.

Grab a dab of rest when it's within reach while you keep the banners of immediate concerns flying.....

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Friday, February 9th, 1938.

Memorandum:

Fair with a nice fat moon, the thermometer moving up and down from 30 to 60.

The hour is 9:30 and at this moment the annual Chamber of Commerce dinner is in full swing, handing out the awards of Man and Woman of the year. I may have mentioned a few days back that the grapevine confided to me that some automobile dealer named Bestwick or some such is being crowned as Man and that Mildred McCoy is having the Woman's diadem put on her brow. As I never heard of the Man, I have no opinion to express about his selection but everybody knows Mildred and in view of what she did for Bayou Folk Museum, I have a feeling everyone will agree that she richly deserves the crown. I dropped her a note, or at least I wrote her a note, a couple of days ago but, of course, I shall not drop it in the mail until tomorrow.

Every time I came into Yucca today my telephone was ringing but none of the calls were of much interest. Mr. Mett called from Alexandria this noon on behalf of Mrs. Eakin to ask if she and a photographer might come either Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon. It wasn't convenient but I said I would see them Saturday afternoon so they can get some interiors which they want to use in connection with some film or other.

Mrs. Chopin got called as between this paragraph and the above, asking for my advice about the script she had just composed for the Baton Rouge and New Orleans papers about tonight's awards. She was hurrying to get them into the newspapers so a choice could be made to run them either on tomorrow's dateline or on Sunday's as they pleased.

Juanita B. called this morning for a little chat and to ask when I was coming to town to see their new house and to have dinner with her and Pat. It was sweet of her to call. I did not, however, set any date for an outing.

I. S. Willard called to ask my opinion about some kind of anti-



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was planning to write for some publication but although we went into the matter at some length, I did not find out precisely what was wanted before people tapped on my door and that terminated that conversation until later tonight or tomorrow.

I am holding the thought you may find time to glance through the article in this week's Life concerning lamps and things bereft of royal and noble patronage, suddenly finding themselves sketched out for patterns on items that would probably never be transformed into object of metal and glass. I haven't quite finished with the article but found what I did explore altogether entrancing.

I held quite a session on the front gallery of Yucca this afternoon. I had outlined to August some things I wanted done with some gourds just as a secretary and a barber came along. As I went ahead on the gourd things, the secretary busy with some letters and the barber shearing my wool. As neither August nor J. C., the barber, can read and as the secretary exercise in running through the alphabet I believe it was even more confusing for August and J. C. in that the secretary couldn't tell the difference in the vowels so that in spelling outwards, took considerable imagination on my part to make the proper ones fit into their appropriate places as the words were being spelled out. There was one decided advantage in all these mental gymnastics in that time flew by so swiftly that the barber had completed his job faster, it seemed to me, than ever before.

Helma called this morning to report that she had been to the airport to see her doctor yesterday and he had told her she might take a bit of her neck and head brace for a while each day and exercise her neck a bit by nodding her head backward and forward and about. This is the first time she has been given permission to exercise any and therecommendation that she begin gave her a great lift in feeling that she was really heading out toward normalcy.

I'm still thinking about that lady with with unexpected combination of names in the Lee-Lest department, giggling in my beard every time it comes to mind.....

15338

15338

Sunday, February 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Clear and chill, --the mid 20's by night, the mid 40's by day and back again.

The nicest thing about the entire week was Saturday's letter from Lyme of Thursday last past.

It goes without saying I am glad the record turned out to your liking. It must go without saying how touched I am by all the lovely things, so beautifully express, that you had to say about it. I am astonished there was an opportunity to set it spinning so soon after it had been received. It must have been Bonaparte who declared:

"I make circumstances".

Tonight I recalled what you had to say about the sanitation situation when the radio indicated that in a difference between the Governor and the Mayor, Mr. Rockefeller won out and that a start was to be made immediately in getting things back to rights once more. Like so many strikes in the metropolitan area in the past, it seems almost incredible that one like the present one could have ever been organized and carried through, the labor moguls and the politicians in this instance squaring off against each other and catching the innocent citizen right in the middle.

I was sorry you failed to receive the package mailed between Christmas and New Year's. I imagine it is always easier under present circumstances to manage two or three small packages separately than a single large one containing smaller items all at the same time. I should be so happy to replace it, were I able to recall what it was. Perhaps it will occur to me later. I have a feeling, however, that it was nothing of much consequence and so little or nothing was lost save to gesture and that wasn't necessary.

I appreciate the advice regarding the typewriter ribbon. It appears to be one of those things which may be viewed differently by different people. Two or three times Mrs. Walker called me regarding a manuscript, complaining the ribbon was so weak she wished I would use a carbon, sending her the copy instead of the original as she could scarcely make anything out of the straight



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copy. The clerk, on the other hand, when asked his opinion about the strength of the letters on out-going envelopes, said the writing appeared quite adequate for his vision. It's curious on what opinions one must lean in such instances.

I saw J. H. at the store a moment on Saturday evening. He said that Cousin Arthur had called him to say that a flock of lawyers were converging on Mathicoches on the Friday and Saturday a couple of weeks hence and that they all wanted to visit the old plantation, asking me to call Cousin Arthur to advise him which day would be better. I shall phone him in the morning, telling him that Friday will be the day since I do not expect to be here on Saturday, -- what with the Hysterical Ladies' luncheon scheduled for the latter date. As Cousin Arthur seems to have been playing footsies with Leander Perez of late, I am wondering if "Cousin" Leander may be among those present. If so, he is going to have a distressing time when Lestan chucks the early account of Yucca to him and his legal minds. Frankly, it will be a great pleasure to pour it on thick for "Cousin" Leander.

I talked with Natalie a few minutes this afternoon, making arrangements about using the disc at the luncheon and working out transportation for Lestan right after the luncheon. She said she and Lucille Hendricks would be enchanted to manage the transportation, both going and coming, but I shall be driving in with Celeste but shall not remain in town for the afternoon card game.

Natalie told me that a former house servant had come to see her sister of her present servant. She said the former servant is a beautiful young maitron who married a Porto Rican and that they with their several children live in Chicago and apparently doing very well. It was interesting to learn from this resident of Chicago, a person of color, that she and her husband are terrified to let the children ever go out of the house alone, what with all the crime in the streets. I have heard white citizens of the Windy City say the same thing but somehow hadn't stopped to think about it being equally a problem for people of color.

Mr. and Mrs. Eakin spent Saturday afternoon here getting more pictures. I'll touch on that effort in tomorrow's memo. Again my sincerest thanks for Thursday's message but please conserve energies until current pressures ease.....

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15340

Monday, February 12th, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair and continued chilly, --25 by night 45 by day but with sunset the 20 mile an hour breeze subsided and so it will probably be warmer between now and dawning.

I believe I gave yesterday's memo the wrong date, in case you want to change it.

I want to thank you, too, for letting me know about the yellow tint to this stationary. I found a box of it and am making use of it before turning to that which came to hand from Lyme, the latter being saved for periods such as the present when I chance to be without the standard white kind so I may draw on the white when I want to make use of conventional sheets in writing business letters.

I think I mentioned yesterday that I would have something to say about Saturday's session with Mr. and Mrs. Aiken. The purpose of their visit was to secure additional pictures to round out their collection of more than a hundred, being especially desirous to secure pictures of things mentioned in the disc with a view to making pictorial slides in color which will be used by educational institutions, Garden Club and Historical Society gatherings. One thing they especially wanted was a likeness of the grandfather clock. To me, one of the more interesting compositions showing the clock is the one you are already familiar with, the one showing the clock to the left, the door in the middle over which hangs the Kentucky rifle and the statue to the left of the door or rather to the right of the door, neatly balancing the clock on the other side of the composition. Such a shot has to be taken from the opposite side of the room, the camera held between the four poster bed and the wall. Before the Eakins arrived, I went to considerable trouble to haul things around to give the photographer a place to stand and piling no end of plunder out of camera shot, --as between the clock and on to the left as far as the door to the bathroom.

When the Eakins arrived, I pointed out the composition, going with him behind the bed to point out exactly how the camera, as on other occasions, could be trained to take in the whole thing. Then



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Mrs. Eakin, their son and I went into the living room, leaving Mr. Eakin to take the picture. It seemed to me it was taking him endless time to click the camera and Mrs. Eakin, her son and I had a coke, leaving the one for Mr. Eakin unopened until he joined us. When, at long last, he came into the living room, I started to open the coke for him but he said he was not a coke drinker and so I offered port but he declined, sherry and he declined again. I thought perhaps he didn't believe in spiritous beverages and so I suggested a glass of milk, plain or chocolate, but he shook his head but did volunteer the intelligence that if I had some whisky, He would take that. I was surprised, immediately lied, saying there was none in the house and that was that.

We took some pictures in the living room and then returned to the bedroom and for no reason at all, I asked him if he had any difficulty in getting in the figure to the right of the door balancing the clock. He said he hadn't taken the door but merely the clock to the right of the film and taking in all the space further to the left as far as the door to the bath which incorporated all the junk I had pushed there to eliminate it from the picture.

"Oh, my God!" I exclaimed but immediately caught myself, -- albeit a little late, and went on to whatever was next, not bothering to insist he take the proper composition but wondering all the while if, perchance, he had already been fortified with a dab of firewater before arriving with the camera.

I called Cousin Arthur this morning and got the date of Friday, February 23rd, nailed down for the lawyers. He said if I wished, he would consign them to the care of Ann Williams Britton to shepherd them down here. I said that would be fine.

Today's post brought the card from Leigh Barron and I am glad to learn California is lending a kindly hand in his recuperation.

The moonlight is so wonderful I am going to take a turn in the Ghana garden and on my return sample a dab of pecan pie and a glass of milk which ought to be a great help in rounding out an expanding waist line.....

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Tuesday, February 13th, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy and chilly all day. It looked like it might do or not do anything and so tonight, just to show what it could do, the clouds vanished and an elegant moon took over where the sun all day couldn't make it. There is said to be a snow storm out of New Mexico sweeping across mid-Texas tonight and heading in this direction but somehow I feel it may evaporate before reaching Louisiana.

Come to think of it, --and I never thought about it before, how rain and snow storms can travel all across the country instead of dumping their liquid or frozen baggage more or less at the starting point. I can't remember ever having anyone in school ever explain this phenomenon, --the ability of clouds to sustain such heavy loads as rain and snow must constitute, without emptying the whole thing more or less near the starting point. There are so many things I never seem to understand.

My first in-coming call of the day was from the Louisiana State Library in Baton Rouge. Mention was made of the notice in the capitol's paper about the new phonographic disc and inquiry was made as to the name of the producer so that the State libraries might procure same.

After giving breakfast this morning and preparing dinner for August to look after and serve, the cook journeyed to Shreveport to see about her mama who has been in the hospital up there. About 5 o'clock I went to the store to see about some groceries for my supper. The clerk reported that he had just received a call from Cloutierville where Deetsie-Baby and John Wenkuere as of that moment. He said he told them there was no cook tonight since they had mentioned coming for supper. He said perhaps they would be calling on me shortly. I haven't seen them yet, --4 hours having elapsed but one never knows. Perhaps they remained across the fence or possibly they went westward to Fort Polk or northward to Shreveport or perhaps they came here. I shall learn in the morning. What John Wenk is doing in this area, I don't know. He is



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said to have been working on the Moon Shot in Massachusetts but that, of course, would scarcely deter him from traveling. And speaking of the Winks reminds me that last Saturday while Mrs. Eakin and I were waiting for her husband to finish his bouder film shots, Mrs. Eakin mentioned that her sister chanced to be in the same party on that whiz around Europe that Sister and Deetsie-Baby participated in to the distress of all members. She especially mentioned the abandon with which Sister squandered money. She had not heard about Sister's reporting on her return that she had lost or somebody had stolen a lot of her money on the trip. One naturally wonders how much one can squander without ending up by accusing others of stealing it.

Carmen reported on the phone that there was reference to the dinner of the Hysterical Ladies on the 24th. Why the Association is giving the thing publicity, I cannot imagine, since it is said that tickets are sold out. Of one thing I am certain, the guest speaker will not be addressing any over-flow gathering, should one develop.

Mrs. Chopin called me this noon to request a dab of advice on a program she is preparing for the annual Press Association of Louisiana for Ladies to take place in March when she steps down as President. In the course of the conversation, she mentioned some members of the Association who are on the Times Picayune. They reported to her that in case she needed to phone them in the future to try to do so before 3 in the afternoon because, they reported, that all ladies employed on the Picayune have had their working hours adjusted so that they leave their offices by 3 at the latest, what with the disorders in the streets and especially the hazards experienced by ladies in the area where the Picayune offices are located. Somehow this seems to tie in with the Chicago report I mentioned through Natalie the other day. And the mention of Mrs. Chopin reminds me to report that her husband, so long on the brink of death, has been completely restored to good health and has resumed in Alexandria the activities that were his a year ago. He was in Hatchiteches last Saturday but Mrs. Chopin was not at home, Mr. Chopin having been invited to dine at Cousin Arthur's while Mrs. Chopin was not. Cousin Arthur is handling the fluctuating half million dollar estate belonging to the Chopins, money which is likely to end up in Cousin Arthur's pocket, at least so say those who know Cousin Arthur. That shall be for a happy occasion followed by a fruit salad and

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Wednesday, February 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Dark and dreary outside but pleasant enough within. The sky remained overcast all day, the wind cold in the 40's and a drizzle that was sometimes rain and sometimes ice pellets but sufficiently thin in volume as to do more than get one damp rather than soaked.

John Wenk appeared before noon and is remaining here tonight and possibly longer. He said his plans hinged on Shreveport in that if Shreveport remained in Shreveport, he would stay here a few days but if his mother suddenly bounced in here, he would depart at sight or even sound of her approach. He and I, as is our custom, remained at table after dinner and supper after the others had left, talking about Boston where he now lives and, I am glad to learn, a place he very much likes.

Carmen called me this morning to report a case that had just come to hand, --a report from an officer in Southeast Asia, stating that one of the men in his unit was worried about his two children by a lady to whom he was not married. The officer gave the address of the mother and children as being, --the mother -- Lorraine Rachel, living somewhere in the "Cloucheville" area, a town the officer had been unable to locate on any map. Carmen had no difficulty in locating the family somewhere off in the Red River area some miles from Cloutierville. The family name of Rachel invariably is mulatto in this parish but Lorraine turned out to be a negress. Interestingly enough, the soldier, claiming parentage of the children, is white. From this one would assume that even though the mama of the children is black, the children must undoubtedly be mulatto. Carmen phoned particulars to Washington and the message was transmitted to Asia forthwith so the worried papa is probably feeling better tonight.

Mildred McCoy phoned at noon saying she and Lucille Conahan would like to pay their Christmas visit this afternoon. I had an appointment with St. Louis people at 1 o'clock and so Mesdames McCoy and Conahan dropped in at 3 o'clock bearing jellies, cake and home made wine and we had a very pleasant sitting.



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15345

Thursday, February 15th, 1968.

Tonight about 8 o'clock, I had an amusing telephone conversation. A call came in from Mamie Bowman Culpepper from town and when she identified herself, --I haven't seen her in years, --I figured she must have secured my number from across the fence. La Culpepper said she was calling on behalf of Jimmy Perkins, a nephew of Miss Kate, thenephew wanting to speak with me. When he got on the wire he said he had a bequest from Miss Kate and would like to bring it down on the morrow. Headed that as a matter of form, a notary would have to witness it and asked if Mr. Henry would be here at 9:30 tomorrow morning. I told him I had no idea where J.H. might be, here, New Orleans or a dozen places but that I was sure the paper that had to be notarized could be executed and forwarded to the proper hands in case there was nobody here to stamp the paper. That concluded the conversation and perhaps five minutes later my phone rang and Mr. Perkins said he had called back to say that as he had never been to Melrose, he wondered if he should seek me out and I told him I would be at the store at the appointed hour ---- whereupon a third voice broke in, -- J. H. saying quite blandly that he had been listening to both conversations and had heard the notary's seal being required tomorrow morning and that as he was going to Shreveport at 8:15, the matter could be handled readily enough if the appointment with me was for 8 o'clock.

I am still giggling every time I think of it. It is easily understandable, of course, that whatever phoning I do at night, I usually undertake it after 9 o'clock when he is already in bed.

Somewhere along the way between 8 this morning and 8 o'clock tonight, I knocked off a column under the title of "Shadows of Old New Orleans", knocking off about twice as much as can be used, especially if a long quote from the book for which I made an opening in the text, should be attempted. I also made several carbon sheets with covering letters to go to personal friends in the newspaper field so they may make use of the data to give the book a boost.

And now I find myself sleepy and am going to have a glass of M homemade wine which is sweet and quite good, balancing it off with a hunk of cake and then call it a day.....

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15346

Thursday, February 15th, 1968.

Memorandum: I have been thinking about the blue, therefore no gold in today's and tonight's sky. The overcast, nevertheless, holds promises of a brighter layout for the morrow, what with the clouds appearing to be made of of a vast collection of comparatively small individual bells of cotton rather than a solid bolt of gauze. The thermometer has "hoovered" from 30 to 39 all day but we are told it may rise 10 degrees on the morrow, --I hope.

My day seems to have been busy enough but I can't think what made it so. Perhaps I gained that impression because of the early arrival of Mr. Perkins. interruption.....

Now, let me see where we were when that last customer came in, if I may borrow an ancient phrase.

I guess I was talking about Mr. Perkins. The appointment was for 8 o'clock and promptly at seven twenty, a slave knocked on my door to proclaim that a gentleman was awaiting me on the store gall.

I found Miss Kate's nephew a very nice person. He went to school in Hatchiteches in the 1920's or 1930's. He is now stationed in Hawaii in the Navy. His daughter attends school at the University of Hawaii but is withdrawing from there at the conclusion of the present semestre to enter Northwestern at Hatchiteches next autumn. I learned all this during the little tour of the elder buildings before breakfast. We were five around the table, --Jimmy Perkins, John Wenk, Warren Meadows, Eugene Lavespere and Lestank and the bacon and eggs were just right and the conversation altogether pleasant.

This week's Life carries a story by David Snell, about a current movie, Clyde and Bonnie, or some such name. I have heard it mentioned on the radio or have read something about it in the recorded Look magazine. I didn't read the Life article as yet but understand it's a picture that tends to glorify a gangster doing somewhere in Arkansas. Bonnie and Clyde were "bumped off", I believe near Gibbsland, La., which isn't too far from Arcadia, a small town not too far from Saline and Briarwood. It seems to me the name of Bonnie Parker; -- I am not sure, -- seems floating around in my mental file of forgotten



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tabloid gangster personalities which the Daily News or some such paper featured extravagantly for a few days which must have put the thing back into the 1930's. I believe Ada Jack Carver Snell and her husband, John Snell, and their offspring, David, were somewhere around in the Gibbsland area and, little David, unknown to his parents, slipped out the back door of the home where the Snells were visiting and somehow got a view of the corpses or some such thing. This whole paragraph must emerge mighty hazy but I wanted to mention it in view of our interest in following the career of David.

Carmen called me today to tell me about another of her Red Cross cases. The only thing about it was the name of the soldier, Thomas Xeve. I had never heard of the name before but he was formerly a resident of this Parish. When Carmen asked me what I thought of the name I said the only thing I could think of was either a new brand of beer or a combination of letters lifted from some ancient Grecian tomb.

I have been having the sniffles for the past two or three days and so haven't slept as soundly as usual. However, I was able to secure some patent medicine pills, --Centact-- which has as its primary virtue, so far as I can observe, in the fact that it contains something that eradicate the flem from one's larynx. With that eradicated, going to sleep is so much easier since the cough is eradicated and so I look forward to flattening out tonight when I expect to "sleep two orws at a time", as the local colloquialism expresses it, borrowed, of course, from an exceptionally prolific cotton picker who gathers so much in a short time that he is said to concentrate not on one row in his progress across the patch but two.

A couple of Talking Books arrived in today's post, surprising me, in a way, since I had not ordered either but pleasing me nevertheless, at least in the case of one volume which was none other than the Education of Henry Adams which is due for another reading one of these days. The other is the Autobiography of Bertrand Russell who used to write interestingly even though he has now become somewhat tiresome theorist about the atom bomb business.

I have a couple of letters to write and shall then call it a day. I hold the thought little Miss Lee is beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel one of these days.....

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Friday, February 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Still no blue or gold but an all-over gray that suggests a quilt to keep the temperature from varying much from the mid 30's.

I was sorry to learn this morning of the death of Louis "Bill" Jones. Some weeks back he was brought home from

an Alexandria hospital where he had undergone a lung operation. He was taken back to the hospital yesterday, dying shortly afterward. Bill was a grandson of old Carroll Jones who was brought to Louisiana from Somerset County, Kentucky as a boy by his white father who had Carroll ride his prize horses in the finest turf matches in the Pelican State. After the Civil War, Carroll married Catherine Clifton of Alexandria, a remarkable mulatto lady who attained a considerable age, --well into her 90's. Carroll and Catherine Clifton lived in Natchitoches Parish during the Reconstruction period and Carroll served as Deputy Sheriff for a number of years. He and his wife acquired a fine plantation that once had been granted to Antoine Prudhomme, not far from Madame Aubin Reque's home. Carroll's property on his death passed to his son, Carroll, junior, and on the latter's demise, it went to his three sons, Louis, familiarly known as Bill, and to the latter's two brothers, Noble and Randolph, each brother finding ample acres in his respective right to operate successfully. It was on Jones property that, after its conveyance to the Parish, that Saint Mathew's school was erected, Bill having paid for the St. Mathew's clinic to serve the community. When Booker Washington was wanted to come to Louisiana, it was at the home of the Joneses that he stayed when in this section of the State.

I spent most of the morning turning the house upside down, doing a d of carpentry and generally putting things to rights. Just as I had finished as I was putting away the saw, hammer and nail James appeared, remaining for dinner which went off pleasantly enough, what with both John Went and the clerk being admirers of the guest.



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15349

Friday, February 16th, 1968

James seems to be having quite a time trying to locate some envelopes of proper size for shipping records. A stationer in Hatchiteches thought he could get some out of Alexandria but failed. James found an advertisement for all types of envelopes as stated by The Envelope House "carrying everything" in New Orleans. The stationer phoned New Orleans but the one type of envelope they did not have was for gramophone records. They recommended a house in Birmingham, Alabama, and that was approached but they had none. I happened to have a record which had just arrived from Port Washington, Long Island via Newark, New Jersey, Manneraft, but on inspecting it, James thought he could get the Hatchiteches stationer to obtain adequate cardboard that could be cased with the stationer's gear to provide the needed container. He accordingly took it with him and on the morrow we shall see what we shall see. It does seem odd that in this day and age and especially at a time when so many shops sell records that no house in the South can be found in the South to supply such merchandise and the more so since so many paper mills and paper manufacturing plants are scattered all over the place where swift growth of timber makes paper making a common manufacturing item almost in one's own back yard.

I asked James if Mrs. Crabtree was expected shortly since it had originally planned that she would be getting here before the end of the month. He said that he thought she would be remaining in Charleston a while longer as she had much to attend to at The Bluff, sorting out things, disposing of others and so on. He said that transportation costs are so high at the present time that whatever was to be moved should be of some value since the charge of a single vanload ran around \$1,500 to \$2,000. He said there was a considerable difficulty in handling many of the treasures of the Bluff, too, in view of the fact that La Storm had specified many gifts of precious bric-a-brac to many people and then had given away many of these specified objects to other people with no notes being made as to whom they had been given or where they had been removed.

And now for a steaming cup of hot chocolate and thence to my downy pillow, holding the thought that the combination plus a Contact pill, will be get miracles in eradicating my cold.....

12341

15350

Sunday, February 18th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued cold with drizzles on Saturday and a promise of showers for today. New Orleans got well damped down today with 3 inches of rain that washed out some of the pre-Mardi Gras parades but up this way we had nothing but sunshine and I loved every individual sunbeam.

For some reason known only to himself, the postman made his rounds on Saturday an hour and a half ahead of schedule and so I retained Friday's memo to be sent along with today's.

In Saturday's post there were three letters asking for paintings by Clementine Hunter, --Los Angeles, Cheyenne, Wyoming, Madison, Wisconsin. In acknowledgement of their receipt, I thank the opportunity to mention that a new record about Melrose has something to say about Clementine Hunter and I shall be curious to see if people who are anxious to secure Hunter paintings may be interested in a record having something to say about her. It occurs to me that similar letters might well be written to people whose names appear in the artist's guest book. Several pages from a guest book of several years back was presented to the Hatchiteches Public Library at the time James gave the Library several original Hunter canvases and I have made arrangements with the library to read three or four addresses per day from that book. I shall ask James to bring me the current guest book from the artist's house and I shall write a few letters every day from or two thenames appearing in the same source. It will be interesting to see if records will roll in the same direction as the addresses already possessed of her paintings. I, for one, have never put too much value on mailing lists but in the present instances, one at least knows that the names appearing in the Hunter volume are of people who are at least acquainted with the general layout at this end of the river and accordingly might be expected to respond the more readily because of their acquaintance with the artist's work and the examples of it they have probably seen in the African and Ghana houses.



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Mrs. Chopin 'phoned on Saturday to say that she and her son are driving to New Orleans next weekend to be with members of the family and to participate in some of the Gars festivities. She said her sister had called her, asking her to bring down one of the new discs. She said she and her son would miss this way early Sunday afternoon which they did to pick up a record. To my surprise, they brought with them a fried chicken and a chocolate pie, which I shall make inroads tonight before folding up my beard.

They brought with them various scraps of gossip about the Mardi Gras ball held in Washington last night, attended by several Hatchiteches people who made the trip expressly for participating in the frolic. Jane Hall who assisted me as hostess at Pilgrimage time was among those attending and the College Dean and his wife left a couple of days earlier to make a round of New York shops before attending the Washington thing. She said she had seen the wife of the dean at the grocery store the other day and she had her husband were vastly disappointed because they had ordered theatre tickets in advance and one pair of tickets was for that all negro cast presentation, "Hello, D or some such and the dean and his wife, being hill billies, of course couldn't think of attending a musical in which negroes appeared on the stage. Imagine. I guess this must be the show in which Pearl Bailey is appearing and since Pearl Bailey appeared on the cover of a recent issue of Life magazine, I am wondering if the Dean can possibly permit a copy of that issue of Life to be housed in the college library.

It seems to me the last name of the dean is Thomas. It was Dean Thomas, a formerly athletic coach at the college, who did so much backstage legwork in the case of John Kiser when the latter was President.

The radio seems to be giving more and more time to the Southeast Asia war and the more I listen to the reports, the less I understand. I didn't understand this weekend's visit of the President's visit to the west coast to say farewell to groups about to take off in the direction of the war zone but I did think I understood President J and his visit to play golf with General Eisenhower which seemed to embrace more political and military overtones.....

12323

15352

Monday, February 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Mostly cloudy with just a few gleams of sunshine during the day. Tonight it is clear but continues chilly in the 30 to 40 range.

Something appears out of joint with this machine as evidenced by the Denholme maggins.

But if sunshine was scarce in the heavens, there was an ample supply of sunbeams in the post, what with the letter from Lyme, dated the 16th, having come through promptly together with the grand clippings enclosed therein.

It is so good to catch a glimpse of the environs in which little Miss Lee finds herself and to contemplate the birthday festivities contemplated for the week end to help the little one celebrate his natal day. At the mention of the years he has attained fills me with astonishment at the speed with which the years have galloped along.

I am so glad you mentioned the error in the title of the book wherein 12 years were extended to twenty which only goes to show how obvious it is that errors simply cannot be kept out of any written or printed word. I suppose it is remarkable that so few really do occur in great daily publications such as the Times.

The picture of the aspect of things when the Sanitation Department stopped functioning filled me with astonishment. I suppose people witnessing such spectacles on TV were impressed, but as I leaned heavily on little Miss Lee's report, the impression created on my imagination was telling.

It is such a pity that two such sterling republicans as Messrs Linsey and Rockefeller should have found themselves in opposite camps when the settlement of the strike came around. It seems to be one of those theoretical cases that can go on being argued back and forth forever. I can see the Mayor's position clearly enough, that of standing firm while



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at the same time I can appreciate the Governor's point  
that regardless of rules, something simply had to be done

And so Notre Dame is going to have a face-lifting job  
carried out this summer. I shall be curious to see what the  
scrubbing will do for her appearance and somehow I think  
I am going to like it. Once the thing has been accomplished  
I am sure Our Lady will be uttering a sigh of relief while at  
the same time those prelates and officials who must spend their  
days in the midst of things while the work is being carried out  
will be understandingly twice as happy as Our Lady, once  
the undertaking has been achieved.

I am sorry to say that an interruption came in the midst  
of reading the letter so that when I turned back to the secretary  
I discovered, but only when he had finished, that he did not  
pick up the sentence where he had been when the interruption  
cut him off. It was at the point where mention was made of  
something in the neighborhood of Paris and before we  
could return to that point, another interruption knocked  
out proceedings entirely. I shall return to that sentence on the  
shall be impatient until the morrow arrives.

As was to be expected, there were lots of people  
from far and near coming to the Ile Brevelle Church to  
pay their final respects to Bill Jones whom they buried  
there at 10 this morning. I was doubly happy to see and chat with  
those who had assembled there because I was simply glad to  
see them and, even more, because it meant so much to all  
of us individually that we were thus together and so able to  
speak of him who had gone on before.

Last night I finished the Maureis biography of Proust.  
It's a good book, perhaps just as good as it could  
be when written by a biographer, made not at all in  
the personality so unlike that of the character  
about whom he wrote. The first half of the book had more to  
do with the story of Proust, the last half  
had less to say about the man himself and was, in fact,  
almost devoted exclusively to the books Proust wrote. This  
is understandable and, under the circumstances, perhaps the best way  
Maureis to have handled it. I don't know who might  
have handled the biography better but a person more akin  
to Proust in personality might have been the ideal, perhaps  
someone like Reynolds Hahn or Lucien Daudet, both of whom he  
had loved him and whom he had loved in return, so that that cer-  
tain oneness of each to the other might have turned the trick to  
perfection. In the end, however, one may come to the con-  
clusion that only Proust himself could have written the auto-  
bi that might have been himself.....

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Tuesday, February 20th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Glorious sunshine all day and tonight the starlight  
is splendid. I needed no jacket while working out of  
doors in places protected by a cool East wind. Last  
night the thermometer remained in the 40's and went up  
into the 60's during the afternoon.

My morning had a somewhat hilarious twist in it  
around 9 o'clock. At 8:15, after doing some chores out  
of doors, I decided I would do well to whack off my beard  
before coffee time. I got lathered up nicely and had just  
started swishing the razor around when the 'phone  
rang, a bothersome business when one is up to one's  
ears in soap suds. It was the Heritage people, asking me  
some details about prospects I have been nursing but not  
revealing. The talk seemed interminable as the lather  
felt like an astringent tightening up the muscles of my face.  
Finally, and at long last, I got the receiver back on  
the instrument, just as somebody tapped on my  
door. It was the hairdresser, of course, to whom I  
had sent a message to pass this way this coming Friday. But  
from past experience, I knew I had better make the most of his  
presence and so I scrubbed off the cement that once had been  
lather and proceeded to get a shearing. To my  
surprise, I made it across the fence in time for coffee, finding  
the lady about to take off for Alexandria. Returning  
to Yucca, I found a slave who had been searching for me in  
behalf of pilgrims but, fortunately they never could be  
tracked down. Then I remembered I had promised  
to correct a column at 8:45 but, fortunately all  
telephone wires or at least the central office's equipment  
wasn't working and so I could move on to a normal  
routine for the balance of the day.

At 1:30 this afternoon, I gave I. S. Willard  
a buzz to ask her the name of a publisher of a  
pamphlet from which she had recently read me something. She  
said she was just about to give lunch to her yard man and  
asked if she might look up the file and call me back in  
about 20 minutes. I said that would be



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just fine. In view of the prolonged silence that followed I assume that the yard man must have been unusually fascinating or the luncheon more elaborate than she had anticipated. In any event, I never did hear from her and tonight when I tried to reach her by phone, I never could get through.

Mrs. Walker called me tonight to ask me if I had noticed any signs of change recently when talking with Clara Genuing. I said I had noticed that her voice was rather weak and that in conversation her mental reflexes appeared to be slow. The daughter said that she had noticed the same thing and accordingly was trying to formulate plans for the coming year that would take into account this apparent lessening of mental vitality. She said she had about given up thoughts concerning Porto Rico and was even considering remaining in town because of her mother's condition. There was some talk about re-occupying her house at 1226 Williams Avenue and perhaps building a garage apartment in order to have someone living close to the house at times when her mother might be there alone.

I find it interesting that Mrs. Walker has flatly turned down all appeals by the Hatchitoches Times to take over the editorial post of that paper. Heaven knows it needs an Editor. I know that she has been sampling school teaching jobs in various places in Florida but I suppose now she will pick up some opening in Louisiana, possibly in Hatchitoches. I should imagine the Editor's job would be much more advantageous both as to her personality and to fattening her purse but she seems to have her mind made up on teaching and so teaching it will be. Her son goes away to college if not to the Marines as soon as the Spring semester has terminated and so she is beginning to make up her mind right now for whatever move is to be made with the coming of summer.

I learn from town that the national R. E. A. convention meets in Dallas this coming week, most of the members planning to attend leaving here this coming Sunday. I held the thought the weekend may be quiet and pilgrims few.....

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Wednesday, February 21st, 1968.

Memorandum:

In sharp contrast to yesterday's beautiful weather, today's atmospheric pattern held nothing of sunshine but lowering clouds and alternating drizzles and sleet. At 6 this morning the thermometer began falling from the mid 40's and by noon had sagged to 31. It will go down into the 20's tonight. Fortunately the cold front rolled over us in the morning, giving the rising sun a chance to temper the effects during the day. There is snow to the north of us but I am holding the thought it may be turned into rain before it gets down here.

Tomorrow the postal boys will be observing the Founder's birthday and accordingly there will be no out-going mail but, and it does seem odd, the schools will be functioning as usual just as though George Washington had never been born.

I laughed in my beard at one piece of mail coming today by the post. It was the list of names and addresses from the Hunter guest book, copied by the Hatchitoches library for me. The reason for my merriment is the fact that instead of taking the names down on a typewriter, the transcription was made long hand in a script that utterly baffles my secretaries who cannot decipher a single name, street or town. But I can get around that difficulty readily enough by sending the several pages to one person or another in town, asking that the long hand be read to me, perhaps a dozen addresses at a session and so I shall manage the envelopes alright -- eventually.

I have been giving thought to that 1780 house "near Paris" as mentioned in the February 9th issue of Life. For the past couple of days I have been studying about the matter and cannot come up with any memory of the place. I am going to write Life magazine, asking if the Editor in charge of that article can give me some enlightenment on the location of the place for I think we both would like to get some information about it.

Of course there was quite a fad for artificial ruins in the last half of the 18th century in Europe such as,



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for example, those at the chateau of Beloeil built by the Prince de Ligne and innumerable ones scattered around through Ile de France. Most of these, --all of these, I guess, were garden pieces of a combined classic and romantic flavor but I don't ever recall having heard of a mansion having been constructed in the manner of a ruin. I am puzzled that this particular item should have escaped us all these years.. I am wondering if it could have been just on the edge of the city to the east or to the north where so many landmarks of the ages, such as the Cathedral of St. Denis, have been almost swallowed up by encroachments of industry. Francis Barbier, mentioned in connection with the design for this strange dwelling seems to sound a bell and vaguely I seem to recall a Francis Barbier who had something to do with a country seat of the sister of Louis XVI, Madame Elizabeth. And then there was Georges Barbier who, at the turn of the 20th century, did these marvelous illustrations for an 18th century of the Romance of the Rose, so beautifully reproduced in full color in illustration around 1910 or a little later that I treasured for many years.

.....telephone memo causing removal of this sheet momentarily.....  
I learned today that Y. C. Macmillan, son of a former plantation cook Juanita, is in a Shreveport jail along with four companions, charged with being in possession of drugs. Y. C. is always in some kind of a so ffile with the authorities. He is the youth who didn't dare work among the flowers in the garden for fear the hummingbirds would sew up his ears, --as good an excuse as any I ever heard for falling asleep on the job.  
I just now stepped out on the gallery to see what the weather was up to and noticed a row of icicles hanging from the eaves.....

15358

15358

Thurs day, February 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

It didn't snow last night but the sprinkling turned to ice and the icicles grew longer and the cakes of ice in the sugar cauldrons grew thicker during today as a sharp east wind tended to keep the temperature down. It was 20 this morning and is about 30 tonight with a fine snow falling which, according to the weather man, will turn to sleet and then to rain during the night, suggesting that it might turn a little warmer between now and dawning.

I shall be enchanted, of course, if the rain gets enough volume on the ground to convert the gardens into mud pies, thereby providing a perfect excuse to advise Cousin Arthur he had better call off the tour he stirred up for the lawyers' wives or whatever has been gathering steam. I thought Cousin Arthur said the wives of lawyers would make up the party but J. H. says there will be gentlemen with legal minds with them. So be it.

When half through dialing the Parish Library this morning, I realized that today, being the Founder's birthday, no State agencies would be functioning. But I went ahead with the numbers racket regardless and was pleasantly surprised to receive an answer and to learn that "only for some people" is today a national holiday. Store and schools functioned as usual but I assume the banks may have been closed but that is only a guess. I had to laugh in my beard tonight when Mrs. Chopin 'phoned to say that she and her son, Timmy, plan to drive to New Orleans on the morrow, heading out at noon "if the weather is good". From where I sit, it strikes me that the weather isn't going to be good but although the weather is served up as the only possible restraining element that might effect the plans, something tells me that weather or no weather will scarcely hold back the Chopins, once they have decided on such an outing. The New Orleans radio spoke of impending chilliness down that way, what with the local cold wave heading from here to there. Of two things I am glad, first that I don't have to stick my neck out for such a jaunt, and, second, that I am not one of these participants, either in the parade half dressed on a float or overdressed in the crowd observing the freezing figures passing along the line of march.



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I was sorry to learn by tonight's radio that Peter Arno died today. I heard the news twice, both times over CBS, the first time at 7 o'clock, the second time at 8 o'clock, on the World Tonight broadcast. It was interesting that the two different broadcasts cited the popularity of his cartoons but in each instance, described a different cartoon for which he had become famous. I was not familiar with either cartoon they described but I did recall an unmentioned one in which a Florida girl and her boyfriend, looking distinctly dishevelled and carrying the cushion from a car from a sylvan glade, the caption beneath the cartoon reading:

"We want to report a stolen automobile."

I bumped into Peter Arno a few times back in the '30's at New Yorker parties but I discover I have forgotten his real name and that was not mentioned in the radio obituary.

And speaking of The New Yorker reminds me to say that a while back I read a nearly letter from Genet in that periodical. In it, --the whole article devoted to an Ingre show in Paris, -- it was hinted that possibly the public had turned the corner from enthusiasm for Picasso canvases to the more conventional type of thing as characterized by the Ingre method of painting beauty. I trust this may be the case since I, for one, can do with less Picasso and lots more with pictures that give something other than studies in coloring and design but without any concrete figures with which I am familiar.

I have just stepped out onto the gallery to observe what might be cooking atmospherically. There seems to be about 2 or 3 inches of snow on the ground and from the rate the white stuff is coming down, I take it that old Mother Goose is really shaking her featherbed with a vengeance. I am sorry for people planning to make the New Orleans run on the morrow but as for my own convenience, I am delighted that the situation on the morrow ought to make impossible all thought of the legal minds undertaking a tour.....

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15360

Friday, February 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 30's with 4 or 5 inches of snow on the ground.

The thermometer skidded to 20 last night but climbed back into the 30's when the sun rose this morning on a cloudless sky. Not much melting occurred today. I am holding the thought we may get a rain to dissolve the snow but the weather bureau doesn't sound very promising about higher temperatures.

But there's no great snowfall without some small advantage in that the pilgrimage by the legal minds never did materialize and the annual luncheon of the Hysterical Ladies was postponed for one week on the assumption we might be thawed out by then. Evelyn Taylor and Carmen called this morning to ask me what I thought about a postponement. Evelyn being President of the Ladies and Carmen Vice President. As soon as the decision had been made, the announcement went on the radio immediately. I called Natalie at noon to tell her about the change in time and she was very nice about having the use of the record to be used in connection with the talk pushed back a week, even though I think she had already made arrangements to have the thing set up for tomorrow.

From radio reports, it is obvious that more snow fell between Alexandria and Baton Rouge than here. Ice seems to be a decided factor on so many bridges and the big one across the Atchafalaya was closed last night and remained closed today, or at least was still closed during the middle of the afternoon. It was said that traffic was at a standstill for miles north and south of that bridge. Natalie said her son was bringing his fiancée to Hatchitoches for the weekend but that she had no means of knowing when or even if they will make it since telephone and telegraph wires are all down south of Alexandria.

Last night Mrs. Chopin phoned to say her son in Dayton, Ohio, had called her to say he and a girl friend were heading out for



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New Orleans, leaving Dayton at midnight so they all might participate in a family reunion in the Crescent City this weekend. In view of perpetual warnings on the radio for everyone to keep off the highways, it seemed to me the height of folly for her and her other son to plan taking off before the storm was finished and through traffic possible. But, like most people, once the impulse to road run gets hold of them, there is little that will change their minds. If they made it today, they may be said to be lucky. Once arrived, however, they at least have plenty of kin folk to entertain them.

John Wenk came here from Shreveport last night to remain today and depart at first dark for Camp or Fort Polk where he plans to pick up Deetsie B. by and rush on through to New Orleans where they know nobody and have no reservations at Mardi Gras time when caravans for miles around have been booked up months in advance of this weekend. It must be wonderful to be young and foolish.

Tonight's radio mentioned today's death of Fanny Hurst. I am quite sure I never tried reading one of her novels even when everybody was reading her and I should have taken a glance through some of her things for I sometimes found myself at supper parties when she and my friends, the Frank Du Monde and the Robert Vonnachs occupied studio apartments at Hotel des Artistes just off Central Park in the 60's. If memory serves, la Hurst at that time was married to Rae Samuels but it seems to me they maintained separate apartments. The brief mention of her death tonight made no mention of marriage, saying only that she was 78 and one of her most popular books was Back Street.

Doreatha told me this morning that last night in the snowstorm one of Murphy Brown's boys, after more than 20 years of absence in California, put in an appearance. I suppose he will be dropping around to see me one of these days. I may have mentioned that Murphy's wife is Minna and while their son was really given his papa's name of Murphy, nobody ever knew him as Murphy, junior, but always as Junior Minna. Everyone remembers Junior Minna's remarkable perruque. Although pure negro on both sides of his family, there wasn't a kink in his hair which was black but not in any way shiny but rather the color of charcoal, the like of which nobody around here ever saw before.

I hold the thought there is less snow in Lyme than locally and that little Miss Lee is grabbing a dab of relaxation.....

12303

15362

Sunday, February 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Glorious sunshine both yesterday and today with the thermometer in the upper 40's and lower 50's. Net result: most of the snow has melted.

Louisiana Heritage Association 'phoned me on Saturday. It seems the disc is rolling nicely and accordingly the Association is preparing to bring out another printing. The new one will be properly adjusted to eliminate the flaws in the first edition. I suggested that after the corrections have been made, they let me check on it before it goes into production. Perhaps this new edition may be more correct if not so interesting as the original.

In my delight at not having to bother with the legal minds on Friday, I had not taken into account that I might get a visitation from the same group on Friday or rather on Saturday and that is just what happened. About 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon I saw figures moving about on the snow in the white garden. It seems that Cousin Arthur had brought down some people and J. H. had told them they might stroll about in the slush if they cared to while he and Cousin Arthur chatted at the store. There were a Mr. and Mrs. Oppenheimer of New Orleans who were especially interesting. Mr. Oppenheimer, as I learned later, wrote the Louisiana State laws on Trusts but his leglad mind did not prevent him from enjoying other things and although he is troubled by a floating retina, he nevertheless is a camera enthusiast and was busy as a bee catching shots of snow on the roofs and so on.

The folks across the fence were scheduled to leave "early" this morning for Dallas. "Early" for them usually means before daylight but they were still here at 9 o'clock this morning as I discovered when I passed by their house to pick up a package they were to leave for me. I understood Lull Hankins of Natchitoches was to drive them and so I called Lull's house about 10:30 and learned the party had indeed departed. I found it mildly hilarious that I should 'phone to a point 14 miles away to learn what was going on just across the fence.



15363

15363

I. S. Willard called this morning to ask if she might pay me a visit this afternoon. She might. We hit on 2 o'clock as the magical hour and I must mark this on the calendar, she arrived at 2 o'clock, probably the first time in her long and busy career.

Last week I had mentioned to her that the Heritage people were hopeful of obtaining a camera shot of some sketch of the first fort in Natchitoches and as she had made such a drawing and had threatened to give me one of the reproductions she had had made of it, I suggested when she called that if she had no objection to its use on a slide, she might bring it along and she thought that would be timely. And so she arrived, loaded down with all sorts of expected things, prints, cards, food and what not, --almost anything you might care to name except, of course, the sketch of the fort. That's our Irma.

We had a very pleasant sitting and the conversation ranged widely over her son's activities in Europe to the health of her sister-in-law in California. She mentioned that Mr. Kinsey of Northwestern had once spoken to her about doing a tape recording about Miss Cam but she had heard nothing more about that project, initially brought up a couple of years ago. I must take up that matter with Mr. Kinsey. Her impressions of Miss Cam cover a long span of years and should be interesting. Of course I could not tell her the reason why Mr. Kinsey may not have pushed the project further which is based on the fact, I assume, that Irma is inclined never to finish a sentence and to go off at such tangents between her "errrrr, ahhhhhs, ohs...." that she would never get to first base in the first several hours of writing a first paragraph. Poor Irma.....so gifted in so many ways and yet so much inclined to stumble around in her sentences that I fear she will never excel in recording extemporaneously unless she does a heap of practicing to keep her voice fixed on a beam, driving through to the end of each sentence.

Saturday's post brought a letter from Sterling Cook. I shall send it along later because I think you will enjoy it, too. I am retaining it until I can jot down some of the data it contains about his old house at Stone Hollow. During the past couple of years he has been working steadily at it and in January he finally moved in. He has an account given by an 85 year old granddaughter of early, --ante bellum owners, --Mennonites from Germany. He declares he is as happy as a clam in his new habitation and it does one's heart good to see what generous dividends in satisfaction the old place is paying.....

15364

15364

Monday, February 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Oceans of sunshine and tonight, there being no moon, the stars are marvelous. Thermometer in the 40 - 60 bracket but the sun is causing the twigs of the red bud trees to swell most promisingly.

James appeared unannounced at 10:30 this morning and remained for dinner. I had asked him for copies of two reviews of his book, thinking you would like to have them and I shall enclose them. I found them both quite favorable. Cleiter is at present studying about the story James wrote and re-wrote about the Tallon Prince of Natchez.

He said that he and Kay went up to Briarwood one day last week and found Carrie hitting vigorously on all cylinders. I am sorry to say, however, that Carrie has pulled another boner that strikes me as worse than the one she demonstrated that time when she tore up the Leutcher-Stark check for several thousand dollars just to show that she didn't have to do anything she didn't want to although she really did want the money at the time and was happy to paint the pictures of flowers the Leutcher-Starks had wanted.

This latest stupidity has to do with Briarwood. Carrie says that although she knows her niece, Carolin McClanahan, will sell Briarwood, once it belongs to her since Carrie is leaving it to her in her will, still Carrie is going to leave it to her niece regardless although she, herself, so much yearns to have it preserved as a sanctuary of native plants and trees and birds.

The Federal Government owns and maintains lands adjoining Briarwood, all part of the Kaskade National Forest. Recently Carrie inquired if the Federal Government would be interested in her property. The Park Service immediately jumped at the inquiry, offering to leave it just as it is and untouched by them until Carrie's death, after which they would put it within the limits of the neighboring forests the Government owns, guaranteeing that the virgin trees would be retained, the bird sanctuary maintained, the native plants protected and, as between now and Carrie's departure, to give Briarwood all the protection from fire, marauders, etc., etc., --and Carrie denounced them and didn't ask me why. That's Carrie, --and nobody hopes to comprehend the workings of her mind either in this instance or the Leutcher-Star incident.



13821

15365

As for other news on the Hyde Park front, it is planned that Mrs. Crabtree will fly to Shreveport on March 17th, --the seventeenth. Ray will drive to Shreveport to meet her, leaving the car there and both ladies will take a plane to New Orleans or Franklinton where, supposedly on the following day, the Emerald Company, of which Ray is the majority stock holder, will board a yacht to sail up some bayou or other through properties owned by the Emerald Company, the party being made up from companies and officials of the same and allied organizations. I don't know how long that jaunt is scheduled to take but by the night of March seventeenth Mrs. Crabtree should be sleepy enough, I should imagine.

There is some talk about Mrs. Crabtree occupying the top floor of I. S. Willard's house until Ray finds the type of house she has in mind for entertaining and as soon as that is acquired, Mrs. Crabtree will occupy it. Getting this news from James, I find myself smiling in my beard when considering that I. S. Willard hasn't mentioned the arrangement made for Mrs. Crabtree to be housed temporarily under the Willard roof.

Mrs. Chapin, phoned tonight about 9 to report that the trip to New Orleans had turned out perfectly and that her son from Ohio had not experienced any difficulty in driving to New Orleans from Dayton. She said it was below freezing in New Orleans Friday night but Saturday and Sunday were pleasantly mild and the parades wonderful. Her other son who accompanied her on the trip had taken his girl-friend along and the son from Ohio had brought a young lady with him and so the two couples, having secured invitations to the Venus ball, attended that soiree and every body seemed to have a marvelous time. In spite of the dire warnings broadcast over the radio stations all around on Friday morning, advising people to avoid getting into the big road, the presence of snow on the road was worrisome only as between Hatchitoches and Alexandria and even that stretch of highway had been cleared of snow by grading machines. It snowed between Alexandria and Baton Rouge as they proceeded on the way southward but the snow was not sufficiently heavy to make driving difficult and, of course, the snow was all gone by today when they made the trip back to Hatchitoches.

And so things turned around about the Pelican State and I was happy today that I could get some spading done in anticipation of planting a few hardy vegetables one of these days...

Chinese honeysuckle

13821

15366

Fat Tuesday, February 27th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Another lovely day, all sunny in the 40 - 70 bracket.

The folks across the fence returned from Dallas at 5 o'clock this afternoon. I saw J. H. at supper and got a smattering of Dallas doings but as he has long been, perhaps always been strongly Republican, one takes his political observations with a grain of salt.

The first I heard about President Johnson being in Dallas was on the noon news. I was impressed when I learned that his trip there had not been mentioned in advance. This was his first visit there since that November 22nd in 1963 when the death of President Kennedy made Mr. Johnson the new Chief Executive. The fact that the trip was kept secret suggests that there is still the possibility of danger lurking in the Dallas Streets.

And so the R. E. A. pow-wow was addressed by the President who flew back to the ranch while the Henrys scooted down the road toward home. I have no doubt there will be quite a report of personal impressions by mine hostess over the demi-tasses tomorrow morning at 9.

The merchant-planter's most pungent remark was that Johnson is comparatively safe from assassination since everyone knew that if the country lost him, they would get something worse, the Vice President.

I was happy to round up Fug, bou today when he had not had a drink for I wanted to get the Ghana garden ploughed and Fug, bou did a fine job. It's still early to plant most things but I shall put in some corn and potatoes for they are hardy enough to withstand the March frosts if any and there are likely to be at least a few.

I couldn't say much for today's mail in the first class section. Carmen phoned me yesterday morning to say she had dropped a letter in the post for me at 10 o'clock. It certainly should have been here today but it wasn't. She told me that last Friday she had posted two letters at the same time, one to her brother in Baton Rouge who received it Saturday morning. The other was addressed to the Post Office box of Red Cross in



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Alexandria and a call from the Red Cross there this morning reported the letter had not arrived as yet. The Post Office Department is making such an effort to deliver letters faster than ever and succeeds only in getting them to their destinations even later than before, it would seem.

I. S. Willard called to say she had just received her Tuesday Hatchiteches paper. I suppose ours will arrive here tomorrow or Thursday. She mentioned a couple of good pictures of Hatchiteches under last Friday's snow and a picture of her and Charles looking at an old lantern. She said the column this week is about racecoons in which I quote Carrie's letter and quite by chance, a column or two from the Memo is a series of quotations from the Times 25 years back in which Dr. Dermen is mentioned as making a speech in town about plants. --February of 1943.

It just occurs to me that perhaps one reason there was no 1st class mail today was because the postman was an hour ahead of time, making me wonder if he had not bothered to wait at the point of origin to pick up the in-coming mail for this area. I had about 15 out-going letters which the clerk said he would mail in town for me tonight. The cancellation, therefore, on yesterday's Memo will undoubtedly be from Hatchiteches.

I must remember to ask the clerk if he is now Post Master here. I suppose he may well be since J. H. was supposed to retire automatically from that position last October 3 when he reached 70.

Mrs. Marybry Jones, --Bill Larson's mama, called to inquire where she could get the new disc. She said she had several people to whom she wished to send same, including her son and daughter-in-law in Manhattan.

As I returned the receiver to the instrument, the phone rang again. It was Thelma, asking where she could get a disc to send to her daughter, Janet, in Shreveport. The latter had seen something about it in the paper and had called her mama to hunt up one for her as she couldn't find it in the stores she had shopped up there. I have dropped 30 or 40 letters in the mail during the past couple of days to people whose names and addresses appear in Miss Hunter's guest book. I must scurry around to locate envelopes if any responses are forthcoming. I held the thought Mardi Gras was as pretty in sunshine in Lyme as it was down this way.....

15368

15368

Wednesday, February 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

A drizzle began during the night, kept on drizzling all day and is still drizzling tonight. The weather man, however, says it will clear during the night, the thermometer remaining where it has been all day, --in the 40's.

So many of tonight's news programs concentrated almost exclusively on the 5 p.m. announcement by Governor Romney that he was withdrawing from his race for the nomination by the Republican Party for the Presidency although what he actually said was that he was withdrawing from the race for the Presidency. Perhaps he has been racing for the Presidency all along without bothering to run for the nomination first.

Poor rich Mr. Romney, just another of those good business men who seems to have scant aptitude for politics in spite of the fact that he has succeeded a couple of times in getting himself elected Governor of Michigan.

I am hoping Rockefeller may get the nomination for which Romney was trying. As of the moment, it would seem improbable any Republican could beat Mr. Johnson but if there should be a slip-up and a Republican did, I should much prefer to see Rockefeller occupying the chair of Mr. Big.

Yesterday I. S. Willard asked me if I would call her this afternoon and listen to something she had written about which she wanted some advice. I phoned and she launched into the matter but hadn't proceeded far when we were cut off. I gave a twist to the dial in calling her back, only to have a recording announce that the number I had dialed was not a "working number". I tried a second time and got no signal at all. Then I gave the operator a buzz, asking her to dial the number for me. The phone rang and the voice of a small child answered. I asked what the number was but the child who was speaking didn't know what the phone number might be. Then I dialed I. S. W. and got no signal at all. Then I called the operator, asking her to dial for me and I heard the signal plainly enough but didn't recognize the voice



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which turned out to be that of a long distance operator, --Heaven knows where. Once more I tried and lo! there was I. S. W. I realize of course, that there's nothing new about all this but every once in while I like to pause to consider how bad the service can continue in the face of the two billion profits the 'phone company modestly announces as it annualtake home pay while the subscriber has to make half a dozen attempts to get a single number.

To get any Hatchiteches connection, one always has to dial 352 first and then the number desired. I. S. Willard's number is 3235, following the etq thing so that in making use of the seven digits, one finds the combination limited to the digits 2, 3, and 5. In the case of Natalie's daughter, her number is easy to remember since the last three digits are the same as the first three digits one dials for Hatchiteches town area, her number being 352 8242. And so much for the numbers game.

I guess the postal boys must still be struggling with Mardi Gras hang-overs. Be that as it may, there was no first class mail today and I still am waiting for the delivery of a letter posted in town at 10 in the morning on Monday.

I journeyed across the fence at 9 this morning. Mine hostess reported the best of all kinds of worlds in the Dallas universe of the past three days. There was much time devoted to window-shopping and much praise was expressed about the appearance on the platform of the President's daughter and the timeliness of the brief speech she made. We might have gone into matters a little more thoroughly had not mine hostess espied half a dozen hogs rooting about in the soggy turf of the garden which called for immediate attention on the part of field hands, idled by the weather, who were loitering on the gallery of the store, the hogs vanishing shortly thereafter and I moseying along to get to the Post Office.

Around 3 o'clock this morning I caught the tail end of some west coast radio progrm in which something was being said about plans for filming Proust's Du Cote de ChezSwann. I got only that much and again found myself wondering why an attempt would be made to film such a story which certainly held scant material for the movie media. But the "coffee-grinders" have attempted much less unlikely screen scripts, I suppose, and only time can reveal how this effort will pan out.....

12371

15370

Thursday, February 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold, -- 27 last night, 40 today under a bitter brisk breeze and 24 tonight.

The nicest thing about today was the arrival of the letter with clippings from Lyme. It is so good to know that circumstances may permit a measure of freedom during the absence of a king pin from the commercial merry-go-round. May it be a prolonged absence.

I am so glad to have the clipping covering Peter Arne and I'm equally happy to learn that little Miss Lee has had an opportunity to dip into Years With Ross. Verily that volume has a lighter side that is refreshing and one is allowed so little of that fare during this busy winter season.

The mail brought one or two other letters which I am enclosing. I got a big kick out of the one from Mrs. Youngblood wherein she asked if I am illiterate. I shall respond by saying I think I must be since I seem to understand so little going on in the world.

Carmen reported something odd today. This morning her sister went to the beauty salon where an operator who knows her quite well asked if today might be Carmen's birthday having seen a birthday cake in the bakery with white icing and a legend on it in red reading

"Happy Birthday to Carmen and Desiree".

Carmen's birthday is in April, her aunt, Desiree Breazeale has hers in October and Desiree Worsley, the only other known Desiree in town has hers in December.

Carmen inquired about the matter at the bake shop. They stated that the cake had been ordered over the 'phone with instructions to deliver it to the Country Club. Carmen inquired at the Club about it but the manager of that place had never heard of such a thing. Carmen assumes the order must be the work of a prankster.

Carmen mentioned something else that was odd. She had a call from Baton Rouge License Bureau, asking her the number of her driver's license. She read it to the Bureau who checked on their records and discovered that Carmen and her cousin, Dr. Archie Breazeale of Hatchiteches, have both been issued



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licenses bearing identical numbers. One cannot help wondering how such a thing is possible but there it is.

Carmen was full of news today, perhaps because Charles Cunningham had been to see her. She said Charles told her that Natalie's son who took religious vows cannot become a priest because of unstable mental attributes but that he will always remain in the order as a monk and a scholar.

I am enclosing a page of pictures of the local snowfall from today's Hatchitoches Times. I asked the clerk who it might have been who took the Melrose ones. He said Mr. Thomas of the Times had passed this way on Friday noon, had stopped at the store and chatted with the merchant-planter a bit, after which he snapped the pictures. As I have never met Mr. Thomas, it seems slightly odd that when being as close to Yucca as the Afriean House, he didn't make his presence known.

Today's post also brought me a recording of Jacques Barsan's Teaching America, read by Kenneth Murdock. I shall be impatient until I find an opportunity to dip into it. I like both the author and the reader, the latter, --Murdock, -- perhaps being just a shade below Secorby in excellence in putting across the recorded word. In the same category is Norman Rose or Rhodes, I forget the spelling. Any book any of these gentlemen read is a pleasure to follow and as for the author, he always seems to be first rate, no matter the subject he decides to air.

Although I seem to do a great deal of complaining about the telephone, I felt today that I ought to take back every thing unpleasant I have said about it. This right-about-face came from the fact that occasionally I find I really do appreciate the neatness and dispatch with which a negative answer may be delivered to dispose of an invitation that would take much longer, were it involved in an exchange of letters. This morning I received a call from some club in New Orleans.....this machine seems to be kicking up. I hope it holds together until the envelope is made.

I am so glad mention was made of the Benedict Arnold matter in Life. The format or layout or something of that magazine appears to reveal a different personality somewhere along the line but, praise the Lord, the material continues as fascinating as ever.....

[illegible]

15372

Friday, March 1st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with the thermometer moving from 24 last night to 45 this afternoon. The promise for tomorrow is slightly warmer and only partly cloudy.

My head seems to be moving into the stewed owl section but thanks to CoContacts, I shall be able to operate alright on the morrow before the microphone and the cold will supply a fine alibi for the duller aspects of the oration.

Natalie just 'phoned to ask me exactly where on the record I wanted the voice to take over the speech. I told her it would be all right anywhere toward the end of the page 1 section. She held her receiver close to the machine, applied the needle to the disc and hit just exactly the spot I wanted. She exclaimed she could never repeat that performance again and I assured her it didn't matter at all where the thing started.

She told me that Cousin Arthur called her last Saturday morning, asking her if she would kindly take the Oppenheimers to Melrose. She said her response was immediate and clear, --No. She said she told Cousin Arthur she thought it a crime that Leston couldn't have at least Saturday afternoon without pilgrims and Cousin Arthur had said he thought Leston wouldn't mind this once to which she responded that one might multiply that exception 52 times a year which is just what happens every Saturday and that she, for one, would be no party to it.

And so Cousin Arthur himself brought the Oppenheims down and later he called Natalie to say that he thought he had been right in the first place, to wit, that Leston wouldn't mind because, as circumstances proved, the Oppenheims swore to him that nobody could have been more charming to them than Leston, thereby proving to Cousin Arthur that Leston didn't mind. How wondrous are the workings of the legal mind.

I read a little last night from Jacques Barzun's Teacher in America and found his phrases much to my liking. I am hoping to get back to the book tomorrow night, having decided to do the beard folding early tonight.



12345

15373

J. H. spent the day in Shreveport on Business and the cook took her mama to Shreveport to the hospital today and so the clerk and I dined with Celeste this noon. As always, the fare was excellent, including the first try she had had in serving fried schrimp which she had bought already breaded so that all one had to do was put them in the deep fat a few minutes and serve. My only objection of things fried in deep fat in the home is the fact that deep fat somehow has a way of permeating the whole house. I know not if the same phenomenon still persists, but hilibut stake in the frozen food scot but in the old days the wonder of that was that there was never any aroma of fried fish when taken from the frozen food container and nobody has ever explained to me how it is that the fish does not seem to fill the kitchen with the unpleasant aroma of fish.

I am always delighted when I discover a new meaning of an old word or make the acquaintance of a word, heretofore unknown to me. In casual conversation the other day, somebody asked me if I liked raspberry shrub. It was as though I had been asked if I liked to play a violin, having to confess I had never tried. In the matter of the shrub, I had never known that the word had any meaning than that of a plant more or less like a bush. But it seems that shrub may also mean a drink a concoction of raspberry juice and some kind of an alcoholic dash either added by the fermentation of the berry or added to the drink. Then when I said that of late I had been drinking lots of "coolaide" which I liked for itself and thought noble about imbibing since there is no sugar in it although it is very sweet, my informant said that if one put a spoonful of apple cider into a glass of raspberry coolaide, the taste was delightful. I had some cider, --Heaven knows what kind, in the house and so I tried that combination the other night and found it quite pleasant. Of course the cider tempered the sweetness of the d producing a taste no unlike fresh apple cider just out of the press or mill. I don't think I shall go to much trouble to cast about for real apple cider to tineture the drink that I already like, mostly for its sweetness and flavor, but I am glad to know about the possibility and shall perhaps try it again when the weather turns a little warmer and I yearn for a variation on the berry theme.

And so the weekend approacheth. I held the thought it may be just the kind that little Miss Lee may enjoy to the fullest I understood the radio to predict rough weather in the Lyme area for this weekend but I am holding the thought the prognostication was false but, if it were true, that one may remain all cosey within doors.....

12345

15374

Sunday, March 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum: to be kept in the file of the day.

Cloudy and drizzly on Saturday except from 11:15 to 3:30 when it stopped the dampness long enough to go to town and return dry shod. Today is sunny but cool as yesterday, 30 to 45.

Putting myself in the place of little Miss Lee, I shall volunteer information on that score in some detail, thinking that is the way I would want it, had she been here and I in Lyme.

To my surprise, James appeared around 11 on Saturday morning, just as I was about to step into my tub and don fresh raiment. He told me Kay was going to the luncheon with several ladies but since I did not go to town last Saturday, he hadn't thought I would be going this weekend. Celeste and I had planned to leave here about 11:30 and I made it alright for James did not remain long.

I had never been in the new building where the luncheon. It is ultra modern with much glass walls and beautiful iron or chromium banisters. In the room where the meeting was held, a large room, the officers and guest speaker ran more or less the width of the place, perhaps 14 or 20 places at table set on one side and facing the other long tables filling the balance of the hall, the long tables not placed straight but in chevron style.

We entered at the far end of the hall, passing along the rail between ends of the tables where we had an opportunity to meet and chat with a great many ladies, perhaps 174 or 200. The ladies' dresses were so pretty, the happy shades of soft coloring probably standing out sharply against Leston's black suit and black tie when, as occasionally happened, one or another fine feathered friend took occasion to embrace me.

Just before the luncheon began, there was a brief prayer by Lucille Hendricks, Dean of Women at the college and her voice gave me some notion as to the quality of the public address system for I was sitting just to the left of the microphone, Carmen on my left, Thelma on her left and so on down the table while Evelyn Taylor, President, was to the right of the microphone and so on down the directors' table.

While the luncheon was being served, there were some delightful songs accompanied by an organ, --children, some colored some white, who warbled enchantingly, some modern some old fashioned songs, "Kentucky Days", etc.



15375

15375

Before we arrived as I noticed just before sitting down, Natalie had had the machine bearing the Heritage record just behind Lestan's place and well within range of the microphone.

The luncheon was on the light side, --a pimento sauce with a marvelous dressing, creamed chicken in a shell, string beans, radishes, carrots, French rolls for tea, pastery and coffee.

Some minor business of the organization was transacted and then Lestan was introduced with something of a flourish. I was mildly surprised to note that as the speaker arose, so did everyone present. The speech itself seemed to go off alright. Toward the end, I found myself wondering if that part of the record about Ghana would come through alright. In anticipation of a possible delay, however, the speaker remarked that he hoped the next voice to be heard might be that of the record. There was a rather long pause whereupon the speaker remarked he now knew just how President Johnson felt on Friday's goodbye to the Defence Secretary when the electronics failed. Another minute, however, and the voice came through at the pre-arranged place on the record after which the speaker congratulated the Hysterical Ladies on past successes in Pilgrimage matters and expressed the hope the impending season would be equally successful.

There was applause, Lestan taking the bow amidst some racket from chairs being pushed back for a standing ovation on the part of the diner. Nothing can last forever and so Lestan in proper time, resumed his chair but had to arise again as the standing ovation began all over again. In short, I guess the performance went over alright.

Before the luncheon I had told Natalie that I should like to leave immediately after the speech as I had an appointment and could not remain for the balance of the business to be transacted. But before being able to get away from my place a flock of ladies I had not seen when entering, milled around, each identifying herself including I. S. Willard, Kay, the Carver girls and so on. Only one had made an issue about Lestan identifying her by her voice. That, of course, was Suddie Lawton. Lestan was asked to remain just a few minutes longer as the Times photographers were expected momentarily but I left that chore to the ladies and Natalie, Lucille and I beat a retreat, arriving back home by a little after three, and, to borrow an over-worked phrase of Thelma's, "that was that".

It's pleasant being able to report no pilgrims today. The merchant-planter phoned me about half a hour before sundown asking me to join him and the wife in a ride down this side of the river as far as Magnolia and back on the west side of the stream which is quite full, thanks to recent rains I came home under the rays of the new moon which was pretty enough to convince me I should take a turn in the Ghana garden before folding up.....

15376

15376

Monday, March 4th, 1968.

# Memorandum:

Fair, continuing on the cool side, 30 to 50.

Today was one of those when all the pilgrims, not one group known to the others, managed to arrive at the same bend of the river at just about the same hour. First to arrive was Mrs. Ward, I believe that is the name, a lady of color whose husband two or three years ago was given the death sentence for having shot a college youth in town. Mrs. Ward is a school supervisor in this Parish and a very nice person. Somebody had told her to come to me if she wanted Clementine Hunter to paint some pictures. She brought the boards with her but I recommended that she deal directly with the artist herself. I asked her to sit down for a little chat and she told me she had a relative in Baton Rouge, a young gentleman, who does some writing. She said he had never been up this way and that she was hoping that sometime she might bring him here since she felt he would be especially interested in such a historic spot and doubly so since he might see where writers of distinction had labored. I gave her my telephone and asked her to let me know if her budding author should ever get up this way.

Before she departed, some doctor of Paris, Texas, and his family tapped at my door in quest of a Heritage record and hard on their heels came a couple from Beaumont in search of the same disc and before either of the two Texas groups and withdrawn some man and his wife from Lafayette, La., put in an appearance, they, too, looking for a disc. One nice thing about all of them arriving at the same time is the fact that they all were gone at the same time, leaving me unexpected opportunities to do a lot of gardening stuff I wanted to undertake while the sun was still high.

Mrs. Walker called rather late last night. She said she had spent Saturday in Alexandria attending some kind of an educational pow-wow. She said Heddin Carter had addressed the group, using the same speech he did a year or so ago when addressing a group at Northwestern. She said she had an opportunity to chat with him for a little while and was sorry that his wife, Beety, was not with him. The Carters seem to be living in New Orleans most of the time. She said she also enjoyed some educational mogul from Florida who asked her to consider taking a teaching job in one or another colleges down yonder, possibly Tallahassee or Miami.



12328

15377

.8891, 452 807M, 1968

I gather she has been offered a University job in New Orleans. She asked me which I thought more desirable as a place to live, New Orleans or some University town in Florida. I said that I thought New Orleans superior as a cultural center to anything I ever heard of in Florida. I did not tell her I thought she would be better suited to newspaper work but that is what I believe since I think her personality was made more for the rough and tumble of the newspaper than for the sustained amenities imperative in working with faculty associates. Perhaps now is as good a time as any for her to try the scholastic line which may be the only way she can discover her true place in society. She is the type who must make her own decisions which she always does, only to regret later that she made them without consulting anyone when, as occasionally happens, the few friends she has might have charted better courses for her. Quoting Thelma again, "and that is that".

At supper tonight J. H. reported that Sister had phoned him last night to say she was bringing a couple ladies down here for dinner on Wednesday. I am always glad to learn of such visitations in advance and I held the thought that since two ladies are coming with her, all three of the travelers may return home the same day.

J. H. also reported that John Wak was somewhere in Alabama this weekend where something happened to his Volkswagen that would set him back several hundred dollars to have the thing repaired. He was scheduled to be back in Boston today but whether he made it or not, J. H. didn't know.

I believe it was Joe Henry who said Howdy to me today as I passed a couple gentlemen talking on the store gallery. It was the first time I had seen him in months. J. H. says he is building a new home somewhere near Cousin Arthur's new house just beyond Pecan Park and closer to the river. Nobody seems to know why he wants to bother to build a new place and nobody seems any more interested than he seems concerned about being on friendly terms with anyone. My 9 o'clock coffee pal reported recently Joe had proclaimed to her husband that neither the place nor anybody there, meaning this bend of the river, meant a single thing to him.

And so things turn and how nice it would be if one might only share more happiness with those who seem to have so little of same.....

12328

15378

Tuesday, March 5th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with occasional mists, thermometer in the 50's.

Too many people coming and going to give me much opportunity to get anything done except de-frosting the icebox before sunup which was carried through before any pilgrims appeared, thank Heavens.

Ruby Dunckleman 'phone yesterday, ostensibly to mention last Saturday's luncheon, ending up with an inquiry about receiving a couple of her friends today, - some lady from Hatchitoches, the other from New Orleans. The ladies turned out to be very nice and were at the front gate at the appointed hour of 10, a circumstance so rare I cannot resist remarking upon it.

Today's Hatchitoches paper carried the column reviewing James' "Shadows of Old New Orleans". He called to say Thanks and said he had put one in the mail for Claiborne. Carmen had called me this morning, asking me if I had time to listen to the column if she read it to me. I did have the time and she did do the reading of it. When she had finished, -- this being the first time she ever read my column to me, she asked me if I was struck by the fact, even as she had been, that the long quotation from the author of "Old New Orleans" sounded so much in the same style as the balance of the column written by Leston. I agreed with her that it did but hastened to assure her that James had not seen what I had written before it was forwarded to the paper and that at the time I had knocked off the column, I had completely forgotten just what he had had to say about it, that is the book, since I had written the beginning and the end of the piece, hoping that the quotation that was to be inserted would somehow fit into or together, the script I had tossed off and the author's lines which I had run through quite a distance in time before. I must say, and it may have been due in part to the way she read it, but it seemed to me the two modes of expression did give the impression they had been from a single pen.

James didn't have anything in particular to say but mentioned that much furniture had arrived from Charleston and had



15379

15379

Wednesday, March 6th, 1968.

directly into the warehouse. There was some kind of  
a mixup about a check that finally got straightened out  
allright. It seems the moving van people had  
insisted a certified check be handed the truckmen  
on the arrival of the van and before it was unloaded which  
seems to suggest something I had never thought about before,  
to wit, that perhaps such a rule is necessary since it  
is possible, although difficult to imagine, that some people  
might have a lot of stuff moved and then give a check that  
would bounce or have the stuff unloaded and then not pay  
for the transportation. Be that as it may, the van arrived  
after the banks had closed and while the certified check  
was ready for presentation, it turned out that the check  
had been made out two hundred dollars in excess of the  
figure originally quoted. This put the  
man in charge of the van in a quandary as to what should be done  
but eventually some banker was tracked down and the thing  
settled to everybody's satisfaction.

While I think of it, I want to mention how  
glad I was to see in Life the article about the 80 some  
original letters of George Washington that had somehow  
batted around the country all these years and have just now,  
at long last, come to light. There was  
the account of the opening or the dedicating of the Ford Theatre  
in Washington, the pictures of which I was  
especially glad to see. I must say it does seem odd  
to me that I never did bump into the Ford theatres when  
in Washington. I can only assume that I was always so  
busy looking at other historic buildings or chasing  
across the Potomac to do exploring in Virginia  
so that the forgotten Ford playhouse never entered  
my mind. Walker called last night to report on the birthday  
dinner in her apartment to which I had been bidden but did not  
attend. She said her mama had given her a birthday gift  
of a trip to Puerto Rico, -- of all places, -- and  
that last phrase is mine, -- of all places, since the  
idea of going there seems to have moved off the screen of  
interest completely. She reported that instead  
of a birthday cake, Yorkshire pudding had figured in the  
dinner, -- Yorkshire pudding and champagne which suggests  
therefore must have been substantial in spite of the  
bubbles.....

15380

15380

Wednesday, March 6th, 1968.

Memorandum:

It rained 8 tenths of an inch during the night and was  
still sprinkling at sunrise, producing quite a pretty effect  
for the eastern sky was quite clear and the sun's rays piercing  
the raindrops nearer the zenith brought forth all sorts of  
pretty shades. The thermometer started off in the 40's but  
soon moved up into the 60's as soon as the skies cleared  
and tonight the heavens are sparkling with stars, dimmed only  
slightly by the waxing moon at present standing straight over Yucca.

Sister, a teen age student and the latter's mama  
arrived well before noon dinner. The mother and  
daughter were turned over to me and I gave them a tour  
and dictation for the girl who wanted to do a school  
paper on the place. The daughter was very sweet and her mama was  
allright but quite possibly possessed of the same  
qualities dominating Sister.

At dinner we had finished soup when J. H. put in  
an appearance, saying there were some very nice ladies from  
Nova Scotia, Ohio, Wisconsin and I know not where. They were  
librarians and had been in Baton Rouge seeing the State  
Library where Sally Farrell had recommended that they pass this  
way. I hope she did not insist they arrive at 12:10, as they  
did. J. H., of course, should have invited them to take  
a look at Cane River until one at least had an opportunity to  
get at least a step beyond the soup stage.

Secretly, however, I was enchanted at this perfect ex-  
cuse to make my farewells to the Shreveport contingent which  
pulled out before I was finished with the librarians  
from "Way up North".

While I was inviting their attention to the African House  
we were joined by some people from Atlanta who had  
stopped at the store and had been waved into the gardens and so  
I rounded out the visitation by putting the  
whole batch together and keeping them as a group. The cook was  
long since gone as was everyone else when I got rid of this noon-  
day set of pilgrims and I didn't find any dinner al-



08321

15381

thought at supper time tonight I learned from Doreatha that she had fixed a plate for me before leaving at noon but when she was in another room, August had found it and taken care of it.

Thelma called me this morning to congratulate me on my popularity as evidenced by Saturday's reception. She said that Mrs. Walker had dined with her and John last night and talked quite a bit about her decision to teach rather than return to the newspaper field. Thelma remarked that Mrs. Walker's ability to alienate potential friends made it seem to Thelma and John that Mrs. Walker would succeed where ever she went to teach in making members of the faculty with whom she was bound to be associated give her wide spaces to protect themselves from receiving unexpected jabs. She said both she and John felt the newspaper was bound to be the job in which she would fare best since she has the brilliance of mind to command a good post and could operate in greater disregard for the tender feelings of her associates in newspaper work that simply couldn't be sustained in educational work. It sounded so much like what I had written in yesterday's memo I almost glanced around to see if Thelma and John could have been standing behind my chair at Yucca 12 hours earlier when they were probably getting ready to entertain Mrs. Walker herself.

Business must be booming at the atelier of C. Hunter, artists. James mention yesterday that on Saturday she had received 24 canvases from Shreveport with orders covering the whole batch and this morning at breakfast the clerk remarked that yesterday the artist had received 48 canvases from New Orleans from some dealer, asking that she paint all of them and ship them back just as soon as possible. If this rush is merely a trickle of the opening Spring season, Mrs. Ward will be lucky if she ever gets her order take care of and I am very happy I sent Mrs. Ward directly to la Hunter to transact whatever business she had in mind.

The sunshi ne this afternoon was so pretty I couldn't resist doing a dab of spading, being to scatter-brained after the morning to knock off anything on this machine which I should have attempted. My cold, although mild, is enervating and I think I shall give up the thought of either doing any work or even taking a turn in the moonlight in favor of folding up my beard at some reasonable hour.....

12381

15382

Thursday, March 7th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Mild in the 60's, the sky ranging from clear to thinly clouded.

The nicest thing about the day was the receipt of Tuesday's letter from Lyme. It is so pleasant having such charming vignettes of life as seen from the vantage point of little Miss Lee. It is good to learn of a couple of days of change of endeavors as from the business front to the home hearth but the latter didn't suggest any relaxation. I am thinking especially of the charging about to look after the affairs of others and the absence of quiet in adjoining neighborhoods. I shall be interested to learn how the new tenants fit in to their new surroundings and how the general shading adjusts itself to the new location.

It was so thoughtful of little Miss Lee to send along the clippings all of which I read with relish. The will of Miss Hurst was an interesting study and, it goes without saying, I found the account of the lady's career quite interesting and the episode about the remark by F. D. R. hilarious.

I was, of course, interested to learn that the Lyme TV or press had mentioned the snowstorm down Dixie way. The pictures of the snow scenes were adequate to give some notion of the appearance of things. I am still asking myself why Mr. Thomas of the Hatchitoches paper who took them concentrated his camera the way he did when snapping the African House. Although I couldn't make out the details very well, I somehow got the impression that by training his camera on the under side of the projecting eaves, he utterly missed the impressive build up the snow made on top of the roof itself but perhaps I didn't comprehend just what purpose he had in mind in snapping the scene the way he did.

And speaking of the Hatchitoches paper, I am sending along today's issue although there isn't anything of any special interest. I believe either the pictures of the ladies at Saturday's luncheon or the account of the doings appear in more than the 1st section and so I shall send along the whole



08321

15381

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15383

thing. I think I mentioned a few days back that the photographers did not put in an appearance at the luncheon until after it was over and that I declined to remain since I had already had enough of the doings by that hour and I did not want to keep Natalie waiting.

Today's post brought a note from Kay which was very sweet but there were a couple of things about it suggesting she must have had her mind divided on other matters, perhaps, such as the reference to birthdays and most particularly the address on the envelope which I believe indicated Natchitoches as the post office of the addressee. I believe she mentions Mrs. C would be arriving "a week from today", --a week from the 4th not being on the 17th the date previously mentioned but it is, of course, quite possible there has been a change of schedule.

A news item that did not appear in today's paper is one that appeared in other Louisiana newspapers and an impending lawsuit already filed in the Court House, as of March 1st, I believe. I shall run across the clipping from other papers in a few days and send it along although it is of no especial interest. Bailey Thaxton, husband of la bag, is asking a cool million from Mr. Roberson, claiming Mr. Roberson owes Mr. Thaxton that amount of money from profits in a company in which both men had interests. Henny Macker is handling Mr. Thaxton's case and most people usually cast their eyes heavenward at the mention of Mr. Macker's name as it is generally felt he is capable of performing dubious deed under the cloak of legality. I like Mr. Thaxton but know nothing about the merits of the case. Mr. Roberson's husband or wife, rather, was Woman of the Year in 1967, popular hostess, etc. It was the son-in-law of hers, married to a daughter of hers by a previous marriage, who came here or supper a month or two back, --a gentleman from Costa Rica or some such place.

Thanks to the mild weather and the sun, the jonquills are spilling gold all around and about while the sidonia japonicas or burning bushes, some red, some orange, some white, are adding their touch of Springtime just to keep pace with the daffodils, narcissus and other harbingers of the new season just unfolding.....

123821

15384

Friday, March 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to slightly gauze-like haziness in the 60's.

I had a busy day, unnumbered by pilgrims and while I cannot point with pride to any particular accomplishment and wonder how I could have consumed the daylight hours without more to show for my efforts, still I am pleasantly tired with that feeling of satisfaction that comes when one feels that the engine was hitting on all cylinders even though it didn't travel far.

I received a couple of telephone calls rather late last night. The first was from Sister, asking me to send her ten of the new discs. I got quite a laugh out of the fact that in the midst of her harangue, the connection was suddenly cut. I could well imagine what Hell she was probably raising with the Shreveport Te. and Tel. She got the connection re-established and said she wouldn't be down this weekend but would come early this coming week for a "nice long visit".

I was too tired to make a package at that hour of the night and knew I would have ample time this morning before out-going mail time.

Half an hour later Mrs. Walker called. She said she was wondering if it might be time to transplant butterfly lilies. I said it was just the right time. She said she would try to drop by to pick some up, not for herself but for a friend in town. I said it would be easier if I simply slapped some in a package and mailed them to her or, if she preferred, directly for the person for whom she to get them. She thought that a brilliant idea and looked up the address of the person to whom they were to be sent.

Dr. Sarah Clapp, 230 Percy Street, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

I suppose she doesn't know that I ever heard of "the Divine Sarah". It was equally late to dig dig butterfly lilies



15385

15385

although the moon was so beautiful I might well have done so, had my cold not made me feel like a torn down piece. And so this morning I be-stirred myself before day, did several little chores and by sunup I had dug the butterfly lilies and put them in a neat package and rounded up packing material and packed up the discs for Shreveport.

Friday is housecleaning day and what with August giving me a hand I got that well under way before the 9 o'clock coffee hour. For the past several days, Celeste has been talking about moving the big cape jessamine bush and she brought the matter up this morning. I had seen Andy scouting around across the fence and so I rounded him up, went back to Yucca and beckoned to August and the three of us undertook the transplanting job which went off smoothly enough. Thence back to housecleaning and a dozen odds and ends before noon which gave me the afternoon to devote to gardening.

This noon Camren called to say Ola Mae had just 'phoned from Shreveport to ask her if she could persuade me to get my picture taken by a professional photographer who might be agreeable, the picture being such as to show a plantation bell. It seems that in pursuance of an old custom which had lapsed for a long time, only to be revived last year, there will be an effort made covering the length and breadth of Louisiana to have plantation bells throughout the Pelican State ring their bells at 9:22 on the morning of March 20th as a welcome to Primavera, scheduled to put in her appearance precisely at that minute. There are several bells on Melrose, one or two in the conventional position atop a high pole which, when photographed from the ground would all probably look pretty much alike, -- a tall pole, topped by a bell, with the sky as a background. I suppose Ola Mae may remember that one of these at Melrose is hung at the east side, under the roof, of the African House. She probably doesn't remember that if the camera be properly placed pointed South, it would catch a good likeness of the bell with its clapper showing, against a white background made by the white big house in the distance. Not for the love of me but for the use of a personality in conjunction with the bell is the reason she requested my appearance in the thing. Gaillet, the Natchitoches photographer who took some pictures last autumn down the will come down next Wednesday to see what he can make of the set up up. And that has already torn this paper and I had better break off forthwith. I hold the thought it may be pleasant in Lyme this weekend.....

15386

15386

Sunday, March 10th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy during Saturday, fair by night and a rain fair today. Last night's low was 67, today's high 82. Walker 'phoned this noon to ask if she might bring down some couple from the college this afternoon. She might. She brought the enclosed snapshot at my request for I thought it might be a good idea to have a likeness for your file.

On Saturday morning my 9 o'clock coffee companion said that she and the merchant-planter would be taking off at 6 o'clock on Sunday morning for Biloxi or Gulf Port or some such place for the annual gathering of the Pecan Growers Association. She said she would be having some scraps for Tom and Temm which she would leave on the glider on her front gallery and that she would also leave a picnic lunch for me in the same place. I asked her not to bother about fixing any picnic things but she insisted. The reason she would leave them on the gallery is because they have been looking the house when going away, following the problem they had with Andy.

And so about 7 this morning, I stepped across the fence and found the scraps for the boys in its appointed place. I assume she put the picnic things in her icebox Saturday night intending to put same on gallery this morning but, of course, forgot. And so I told myself there was nothing like a fine omelette to begin the day, being enchanted that I had ample food stuffs in my own icebox. Had there been just a little better excuse for dieting, I suppose I might have done so to advantage so far as my own svelt figure is concerned. But there were ample ingredients for all kinds of banqueting and thus tonight I find myself more rotund than usual.

Saturday night was characterized by much whizzing up and down the road and no end of frolicsome doings at the donkey-tonk where so often everybody plays too rough when fire water gets to flowing too abundantly. It was so on Saturday night when two gentlemen from Magnolia plantation got into



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a scuffle, a 19 year old youth knocking down a 30 year old young, cracking his skull and knocking out an eye. The victim was rushed to the Natchitoches hospital which rushed him to an Alexandria hospital which in turn rushed him to a Shreveport hospital, suggesting that since the patient didn't die while up and down the big road, he may be expected to survive.

I was sorry to learn that my favorite carpenter, Will Rodgers, is dying of cancer in a New Orleans hospital where he had been taken shortly after Christmas.

I talked with Natalie this morning, --the first time I had been able to reach her to thank her for services rendered last weekend in bringing me down from the luncheon. She said she and her husband had been somewhere but I forget where. She said some graduate student in English had approached her to say he was an admirer to the Plantation Memo and asked her if she knew where he might obtain back copies. She told him there was a file, probably not complete, in the Louisiana section of the library at the college. He asked her if she thought it possible he could interview me and she suggested he make use of the phone to ask me about that point. I suppose he may have tired but even the experienced in the strange ways of the entire Parish 'phone system have difficulty in getting any sort of connections and so I assume the uninitiated would never be likely to get a call through.

The situation of the telephone in this Parish is something that is at once maddening and hilarious. It appears to be one of the illustrating what can happen when mechanical arrangements for eliminating human operators gets to entirely out of hand that the whole system, introduced because of its promise of incredible efficiency, gets things so scrambled that nobody gets anywhere in efforts to make use of the individual phone or putting through calls in or out of the Parish. I made seven attempts to put through a call to Red Cross the other day, and went through everything from recorded voice announcements saying the number being called was not a working number an operator in Omaha, Nebraska, of all places. "Around and around she goes and where she'll stop, nobody knows."

So beginth a new week and I hold the thought things went along smoothly in Lyme.....

17388

15388

Monday, March 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

It began drizzling before daylight and is still drizzling tonight. I guess about an inch of rain fell, rain we didn't need but which we received regardless.

The thermometer remained in the upper 60's but will go down into the 30's tonight, it is said. When I tried to pick up some radio news at 7 o'clock this evening, the static was such that I could understand nothing. The thunder has been rolling at some distance which, I suppose, is another cold front passing this way. We were lucky this morning when a tornado or two skipped across northern Louisiana. We had only moderate winds in this area except for one puff that knocked down trees and aerials just in the northern part of town but did not get down this way.

I talked with I. S. Willard this afternoon for a few minutes. She said she had rushed out of doors about 10 o'clock this morning to grab up an iron table she thought the wind was going to carry off but discovered the breeze had already subsided before she reached her objective. She mentioned that she was celebrating her birthday and had intended to remain in bed long than usual, having been stirred herself at 4 this morning and then gone back to bed. Kay called her at 9 o'clock, however, and so she decided it was time to get up anyway. She said Kay and James were leaving for Shreveport to meet Ruth Crabtree who was flying in from Charleston. Kay has found an apartment at the Revere motel, --some place on upper Washington Street, in Natchitoches where Mrs. Crabtree will be staying for a while. I suppose this means Kay will allow herself a little more time for fixing or building a house where Mrs. Crabtree may live and where Kay may entertain.

I. S. Willard reported that today's post had brought her birthday greetings from her son and daughter-in-law in Bonn or where ever it is they live in Germany. She was especially delighted that they had sent her a recording which, as I understood her, --and I am never quite sure about that point, they had made especially to convey their greetings to her on her natal day. It strike me as wonderful that they should have been so successful in figuring out just how the package would arrive, not before, not after, but slap on her birthday.



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Mrs. Chopin called early this evening to report on her weekend in New Orleans. Her sister living in Audubon Place was planning to move to some other address and Mrs. Chopin had gone down on Friday night's train to lend her a hand in sorting out things of their mother who had lived with the daughter in New Orleans. It sounded like an arduous journey, leaving here at midnight and arriving in the Crescent City at five in the morning, working all Saturday and Sunday and catching an 8:30 train out of New Orleans on Sunday night and getting back to Hatchiteches at 2:30 Monday morning. It doesn't sound like the kind of a weekend one would classify as restful but son people don't mind hurly-burly and that one sounds as though it might be called plain pure in the merry-go-round department.

Mrs. Walker called and read from the 2nd volume of Painter's *Prose* I covered Proust doings from August to December of 1905 when little Marcel was living at Hotel des Reservoirs at Versailles. For some reason, little Marcel seems to have been very cagey about mentioning anything about his labors on "A la Recherche" but Painter leads one to believe that it was at Versailles at this time that work on "Du cote de Chez Swann" was under way. It was the time of the year when people were wont to visit the gardens when the leaves were falling, surely a wonderful season where there are so many leaves to fall. Mention was made of various people at les Reservoirs at the time, --autumn of 1906, including Beni de Castellane, Gladys Deason the American heiress, later to marry the Duke of Marlborough after the latter's divorce from Consuelo Vanderbilt. It was during this autumn of 1906 that little Marcel was trying to make up his mind about a new apartment in Paris and the Vicomtesse de Noailles mentions somewhere that it was at this time when she was in Paris, she was called on the phone by a member of the Reservoirs staff on behalf of Marcel, the staff member explaining he was calling on the part of Monsieur Proust, asking Madame la Vicomtesse to say if she thought Monsieur Proust would be well advised when quitting 45 rue Courcelles to take the apartment at 102 boulevard Haussmann. What a question at any time but especially at such an hour and through such an intermediary.

On the home front it appears numbers of blackbirds are continuing their withdrawal while the robins seem to be increasing in numbers, being waves of them, possibly from the south, starting their norward trek, this being a stepping off place along the way.

And now I must knock off a few letters and then call it a day, a drizzly day but a happy one withal.....

15388

15390

Tuesday, March 12th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, occasional drizzling and cooler, --high today around 40, tonight it will slide down to the upper 20's.

James appeared this morning about 10, --early for him, and remained for dinner. He said that yesterday he and Kay had driven to Shreveport to pick up Mrs. Crabtree, leaving Hatchiteches around 10:30 and passing through strips of darkness so great as to require headlights, followed by gaby in the gloom by a few miles of radiant sunshine, followed by more gloom and headli

They lunched leisurely and were at the air port a little after 2 when the plane was scheduled to arrive. They asked if it was on time and were told it would not arrive until after 3. They sat down for a while and at 2:40 a lady approached them and it was, of course, Ruth Crabtree. She said her plane had been right on schedule which ju goes to show something or other.

They came through some rain on their way home until they reached the edge of Hatchiteches about where that big pipeline explosion took place a few years ago when hail came down with such intensity that it seemed to be in the midst of a snowstorm, and they were forced to drive to the side of the road and stop. I was glad to learn they had made it alright and that the hail had remained in the north rather than down this way.

They have taken an apartment for a month at the Revere motel for Mrs. Crabtree, --perhaps a small house there and are going to begin looking about for a house right away, where Mrs. Crabtree may make her home and where Kay may entertain comfortably.

Just after dinner, the store 'phoned to say some of the Garrets from False River or Baton Rouge were here, asking to see me and so James ran along and I saw the Garretts, very charming and much in favor of embracing although I couldn't remember ever having met any of them before. I suppose they must have been great nieces or some such of Miss Cam.



00321

15391

Tonight when I tuned in of the radio to see if returns were coming in from the New Hampshire primary, I chanced upon an hour long radio program about these largest of swallows, the purple martin. I guess it was a week or two ago I wrote a column about the bird and so I was especially glad to learn something more about this particular feathered friend. Some of the things I learned were these points:

the martin weighs about 8 ounces and eats insects equal to his weight daily

the martin lives from 10 to 14 years

it's a type of martin, close kin to the purple martin, figuring every March in the Capistrano visitation.

Garden Clubs across the country are adopting the martin as their special ward

the early explorer (explorers) found that the American Indians welcomed the martins as neighbors because the Indians were more comfortable when the martins had swept the air of insects. I guess I had said something about the negro in Africa on that point.

like other birds, the martin has an extraordinary home instinct and young ones, isolated at hatching time and when able to fly, if transported hundreds of miles away will fly right back home every time.

New Castle, Pennsylvania, as early as 1840 undertook as a town to make the martins welcome on every migration.

I must get somebody to read me the martin column when it appears within a couple of weeks or so just for the fun of seeing what better I might have done the thing, had I heard tonight's radio program before writing the piece.

My neighbors across the fence got back from the Gulf Coast this afternoon about 3 but I did not see them, but shall on the morrow. J. H. might have been seen at supper had he not gone to town for a bank meeting which usually is held about the supper hour. Members of the board of directors hold 13 meetings a year receiving 75 dollars for each meeting which is pretty good for laborers that usually last such a short time.....

00321

15392

Wednesday, March 13th, 1968.

Memorandum:

It cleared at midnight and today was fair but chilly, --32 at sunup, followed by a cold breeze of 20 miles an hour all day. It subsided at sundown and tonight is still "air-ish" but mild under a glorious full moon.

Gillette, the Hatchitoches photographer, who had an appointment with me at 10 called to say he would be half an hour late. He arrived at 10:30 and took the picture of Lestan pulling madly on the rope of the plantation bell, rigged up on the east wall of the African House, the big house showing in the background. Mr. G. volunteered two thoughts, --"I'll probably never get paid for this job since payment is supposed to come from Ola Mae", and second, "I doubt if she gets another picture half as interesting as this one although I'm not at all sure she will have the sense to make full use of it".

It seems that Mr. Gillette has had adventures to his financial loss with Ola Mae before but he carried out this order primarily because Carmen asked him to execute it and, perhaps equally telling, because Carmen guaranteed he would be paid whether Ola Mae came through promptly or not.

I assume the article for which the picture is to serve as an illustration must be slated for appearance in this weekend's newspapers although that is merely a guess on my part. After all, Spring is scheduled to arrive a week from today at 9:22 a.m. and accordingly it would seem that news about the plantation bell serenade in welcoming the arrival of Primavera might be expected to appear before rather than after the event is to take place but one is never certain about such things. Of one thing, however, of which there has been plenty of examples in the past and that is that both Ola Mae and Carolyn seem to love to put off doing until the very last minute and it may be that the present thing is a case in point. Today being Wednesday, one supposes the photographer will not get



15393

15393

the films processed before Thursday and perhaps forwarded ed to Shreveport before Thursday night or Friday. Most of the features going into the Sunday papers are published either on Saturday, --mostly Friday, and thus it will be a case of "nip and tuck" if the Ole Ma opus ever reaches the press in time. In the event the article misses this weekend editions, it will perhaps, and only perhaps, appear the following weekend, explaining perfectly to the puzzled reading public what all the racket of plantation bells across the State may have been about on the preceding Wednesday. In short, the whole business has all the earmarks of a pure Ole Ma.

I saw my 9 o'clock coffee companion this morning. On greeting me after an absence since last Saturday morning, she expressed regret that she had forgotten Sunday's picnic. She said she remembered not having made it available only on Tuesday when almost home from the Gulf Coast. Everything at the Pecan Growers Association was darling and a grand time was had by all. On their way down and on their way back, they stopped off at Baton Rouge to see the people there, --the General and wife. The wife has recently had a fall on a rug in her own home which boasts of highly polished floors. No bones were broken but the fall was sufficient to provide much "misere" and a reason for remaining in bed, etc., etc. I did not put any questions, thinking I would understand little more than already volunteered by way of a statement of health.

One disappointment in today's mail was a notice from the Natchitoches station of the T. and P. railroad, advising me that Louisiana Heritage had forwarded me a package, shipped from Alexandria via T. and P. A dozen times I have advised the Heritage people to forward everything via parcel post which is delivered here whereas an Express package requires a jaunt of 14 miles to town and 15 miles back to pick up a shipment, a rather complicated business not so much for the mileage as because of the fact that the Express office at the railroad station is open only at such times as depends upon the whim of the Express agent which seems to me mostly never. I sent the communication to James and will let him worry about it.

And now for a turn in the moonlit garden and a glass of milk and that will be it for tonight.....

15394

15394

Thursday, March 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 30 - 60 brackets with a glorious moon again tonight.

My day was cluttered up with people from 8 this morning until 5 this afternoon. It was all pleasant enough but there was no opportunity to get any work done and I had work to do.

Millsbaugh's Drug called this morning to ask for more records. I was able to send them in before 11 o'clock in spite of the fact that there were too many people scurrying about to give me much opportunity to attend to anything the way I should have liked. Among other people this morning was a couple from some place in Illinois. They had been here a few years and were asking another round to say Howdy. They brought a little jelly glass of strawberry stewed with rhubarb and mighty good it is, too.

James came down this afternoon bringing with him the package the Heritage Association had sent me from Alexandria via American Express. What possessed Heritage to send the package via Express, I cannot imagine and especially as I have on two occasions asked that all packages be sent parcel post. Aside from the inconvenience of having, first to go to town to pick up the thing, and second, to find a time when the Express office is open constitute matters of major inconvenience as opposed to having parcel post delivered right here at the post office. And another thing is the time element, for while one complains about mail deliveries, Express in this instance, at least, is even worse, what with the package bearing the notation that it was forwarded on March 1st, requiring 14 days to reach its destination, Alexandria and Yucca being just about 40 or 45 miles from each other. Surely the Pony Express of a hundred years back must have done better than 5 miles a day.

And before leaving the somewhat wearisome topic of the mails, I



15395

might remark upon some of the curious spelling in the Shreveport letter enclosed in yesterday's envelope, --with Leston's name on the envelope of the Shreveport envelope ending in seir, not to mention the omission of one of the n's in the last name, -- which 30 years of acquaintance has done little to make a dent in spelling from that quarter.

Carmen called this afternoon when I was busy, saying she had some people there who were looking for a property, said to be near this bend of the river, known as Pierre Part. Of course I never heard of such a place and at first I thought she had said Pierre Park but the final letter was t rather than k. I couldn't be of any help in that matter. There is a Bayou Pierre north of Natchitoches but that was not in the cards as the place was definitely described as south of Natchitoches. I guess every major stream in Louisiana had at least one tributary called Pierre but as for Pierre Part, that indeed seems to be something new.

A lady from south Louisiana passed this way today. She lives somewhere in the neighborhood of the salt mine claimed the lives of some 20 or more people last week. The radio at no time had mentioned anything racial about the victims but today's visitor mentioned that the entire neighborhood had been saddened by the accident, remarking that both the mulatto and the white workers who had died were cherished by their neighbors.

The Louisiana Press Women's Association holds its annual meeting in Crowley or some such place this weekend. Mrs. Chopin's 2 year term of office as President terminates at that meeting. She called me last night to ask if I would recommend something for her to say as a farewell address. That was easy.

James seems to be toying with the idea about doing a book on the little known, that is to say, the little touched upon facts, about early voyagers across the Atlantic to the Americas and most particularly those coming to Louisiana in the early 1700's and then going on to present how they fared, once they had arrived, not only in the New Orleans area but in the settlements up the Mississippi, especially in the Natchez area. He was especially intrigued with some early handbills concerning the John Law operations in Paris, urging people to invest in stocks of the Indies Company or whatever it was called. James mentioned one handbill that described a remarkable plant said to flourish in Louisiana, the flower of diamond, a plant bringing forth a diamond at

15396

Friday, March 15th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy in the 40 - 60 brackets.

The nicest thing about this 14th day of March was the arrival of the March 13th letter from Lyme.

It goes without saying I am sorry to learn about the cold lying on. I agree with little Miss Lee that while Contact helps in slowing down or stopping the flem, that is about all that can be said for it. I am under the impression whatever the magic there is in it may be a little on the powerful side if too many pills are taken in a row. It seems to me I imagine I experienced the effects of an allergy and accordingly slowed up on in-take but that is only a guess on my part.

If one is to discover a silver lining in the cold situation in the case of little Miss Lee, it is perhaps to be discover a just reason for remaining at home and one is to be congratulated on such good judgement in remaining there. I am holding the thought that by staying indoors, one wins to battle with the cold that much faster and that by now the distemper may well be on its way out.

It was so kind and thoughtful to have sent along the clipping about the original of Baron Charlu, carrying as it does the likeness of Robert de Montisq our by Jean Boldini. In his own day, the Baron cut quite a figure, of course, but surely he owns his present day fame to none other than little Marcel, --a fact that most certainly would have given the Baron quite a turn during his lifetime if he had ever guessed that such would be the case. In a way, little Marcel, so far as his early publications were concerned, was of no greater literary importance than Robert de M. himself and I don't think the latter, having survived the publication of "Du Chez Swann" did not survive long enough to grasp the full import of "A la Recherche" and the tremendous impact the Charlu portrait, not Boldini but by Proust, would have in literary circles around the globe. I suppose it is comparatively rare that a character possessed of such a panicky nature should have the money to play out the role he did in the upper circles of society as he did. I don't suppose he ever half sensed the fact that it would be little Marcel who would provide him with both fame and notoriety to



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15397

down the ages.

And speaking of literature, you will be interested to learn that some society in New Orleans is collecting the few available copies of some volume by Bill Sprattling. --I am not sure of the title of the book at the moment. In some volume he wrote that went through only a small edition, he chanced to mention several residents of New Orleans, only 14 of whom are still there. In order to raise some money to back a symphony in the City, the few copies of the Sprattling item have been gathered together, the autographs of the people appearing in print affixed to the volumes and the whole business auctioned off, one by one, to the highest bidders.

On the "misere" side, Will Rogers, my old friend and father of a couple of secretaries of yesteryear, is back from the New Orleans Charity Hospital today. He was taken there with cancer a few weeks back but nothing could be done for him and so he is being returned to his family on the river. The reverend Jesse Davis, formerly of this bend on the river but now of Natchitoches, will be buried on Sunday at St. Andrew's Church down Magnolia way. The Reverend Jesse Davis was one of those part-time Revue ends who never had a church he could call his own but was sometimes appointed to preach a sermon when the regular preacher of this church or that chanced to be absent. Jesse was one of the few local negroes of his generation who could read a little and he loved to sit on the store gallery and display his learning day of his colored brethren who would listen and be impressed. I remember on one occasion when some high-born mulatto gentlemen from this area got tangled up in some shadey business in Shreveport and with what relish the Reverend Jesse would read it to noon-day letterers on the store gallery, getting a tremendous kick out of the word, negro, as the culprit was listed in the news accounts, Jesse stressing the fact to all present negro and mulatto:

"Now I want you to understand I am not saying these people are negroes. I am just reading you what the paper here says and paper says they're negroes and that's that....."

The appointment for 9:30 this morning was kept by the two people from the western who arrived with much tape-recorder, notepaper and what not. It was a pleasant enough session and I think they got what they want for whatever it is they are doing in Leston.

The artist came to see me this afternoon, bringing a package Madam and which she asked me to pack and mail to Alexandria for I played the part of the record for her in which she figures and seemed to comprehend it fairly well and was delighted. Some customers interrupted in the midst of it so she had to fly, indeed, must I. I shall be holding the thought the weekend may be on the up and up in Lyme....

12337

15398

Sunday, March 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Yesterday fair in the 70(s, today cloudy a little cooler. It looks like the "widely scattered showers" the weather man has been talking about for tonight and tomorrow.

I had pleasant but too many pilgrims on Saturday. There was a party next door for Dan Regard and family from New Iberia. James had mentioned he would be taking Kay and Mrs. Crabtree to Alexandria to catch the New Orleans plane at 3 on Saturday afternoon. I thought he might stop off here on his way back to Natchitoches but I did not see him.

He called this afternoon to invite me to have lunch with him tomorrow. He said he had passed this way about 5 o'clock Saturday afternoon but, seeing several cars, decided I was probably busy and so went on to see the artist. He said Miss Hunter told him about having come to see me on Friday and how much she liked the record. She told him the record sounded just like me. She went even further and said she wondered where one might be able to procure a record. James told her he thought Millsbaugh carried them. She went further and remarked that while she did have a radio and a TV, she did not have a record player and asked James how much he thought one would cost and when he told her, she asked him to buy one and the same record she had heard here so she could play it when she felt like it. James is delivering same talker on the morrow. She has probably heard her grandchildren talk about playing records and she may have been around at the honkey-tonk when jazz records were being played but I suppose this is the first time she ever heard her own name mentioned on a disc and probably will lose no opportunity to set the thing spinning whenever she feels the impulse to hear it or, more than likely, whenever she finds an opportunity to play it for anyone passing her way. I think it is perfectly wonderful that a person like Clementine who spent a whole lifetime in having to pence pennies is now able to have a hand and summon up a new automobile or record player at the drop of a hat.

I was interested on Saturday night to learn from the radio



12338

15399

1968, March 18th, Monday

that the junior Senator from New York is tossing his hat into the ring for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency. The Kennedy name has great magic but I doubt if anybody can secure the Presidential nomination from a Democratic President who may want to run again. Perhaps Mr. Johnson doesn't intend to run and Bobby Kennedy wants to have his name in the hat in anticipation of such an event. Perhaps, even though Johnson might now have in mind to run, he might change his mind by the time the Chicago convention meets but I doubt that very much since, as we have noted before, very very few people, once possessed of power, relinquish it voluntarily. I assume that when, as at present, Johnson's stock is down, Kennedy's stock automatically goes up in popular polls even as the Kennedy stock is now said to be going up. But such popularity is among average citizens and not among delegates to the convention, the vast majority of which I feel Mr. Johnson has neatly tucked away in his pocket.

I made the most of Saturday night it having a go at the reading machine. I had a couple recordings of Look to run through and the Jacques Barzun "Teacher in America" which I wanted to finish. In the Barzunopus I transcend the names of a few old friends which added to the interest in the book although any subject Barzun takes hold of seems to make it worth reading just as anything Sourby reads, even the telephone book, would sound fascinating. I was impressed by one fact turned up in the Barzun Introduction, to wit, that he was born in 1912 and was offered a teaching job at Columbia in 1927. Perhaps there was some error in the dates given or perhaps Barzun's brilliance made an opening for one so young but that seems almost unlikely for a college which at the time had so many distinguished educators on its staff. Be that as it may, Barzun writes good books whether one is interested in the subject or not and so, needless to say, I enjoyed Saturday night.

This afternoon I was enchanted to find additional signs of Spring, --moss milk-chive ribbon grass bubbling up from the chocolate-brown earth and buds on the wisteria that are swelling alarmingly. Verily the wild geese and the martin must be just around the corner and may there be equally convincing signs in the Barzux Botanical Gardens if one but had the opportunity to go and observe.

And may the bells of Spring ring in Lyme, come Wednesday at 9:22 in the morning.....

12401

15400

Monday, March 18th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with an occasional dash of sunshine in the 70's. Tonight's low will be 60, it is said, suggesting the thermometer is beginning to hear about Spring.

And so I went to town today, --the first time this year and it was all very pleasant. James arrived at 10:30 and we took right off stopping opposite the Town House to observe the new building at the Fish Hatcheries. Like one would prefer to associate with so many Federal undertakings, this one is just right, location, exterior appearance, interior arrangements and all. The inside seems pleasantly cool, the impression being induced in part by the fact that it is rather shadowy except in the 14 or 20, more or less, big glass-walled sections where the visitor's eye is on the level with the fish swim in pleasantly decorative waters. There are air bubbles rising from the bottom of each tank, giving added life to the life fish, swimming about and in an out of seaweed, driftwood and other aquatic surroundings. The lighting is especially effective in that it somehow seems to be so pleased as not to be centered anywhere but somehow producing the impression that one is viewing all these scenes from beneath the surface of the water.

This building is the work of the Department of the Interior, I believe, and all the details I captured in my too brief visit be-speak excellence.

We dined at the Town House on the best fried schrimp I ever ate, --the same superlative I invariably employ after eating schrimp there. They are large schrimp, perhaps no more than for a serving which is all one could possibly manage along with French fried potatoes and spinach, a green salad with grand sauce, ice cream and coffee.

I can't remember when last I dined there, perhaps a couple of years, and I was glad to chat a little with Mr. Box who runs the place with considerable dexterity.

Then we drove on into town on 2nd Street where we made some purchases at the seed store, observed lots of types of decorative fish, chatted with the myna-miner birds and generally looked around although there was so much stuff in the place and so many people coming and going that I almost forgot why I was there. Some



00121

15401

clerk, a man of middle age who said his name is Clark, I believe, came to offer his assistance. He called me by name although we had never met. I suppose somebody had told him our names and he mentioned how interested he had always been in Lew Paul and Louella. James and I speculated later on why he had been able to mention the geese, it has been so long since they were mentioned in a column. Mr. Clark appeared pleased when I invited him and his wife to drop in at the peacocks when down the river.

I invested in some seeds, some onion sets, a few "Big Boy" tomato plants and some bell peppers and a few goldfish and that was that. We stopped at a feed shop where I invested in some ice cream, now pleasantly cool, I hope, in the local icebox, awaiting my attention later tonight. I remained in the car while James made the purchase for me. He asked what kind I wanted and when I expressed no especial preference, he said he imagined I might like some Wild Mount in Berry and that is what he found. I have forgotten how it tasted but I remember I liked it the first time I sampled it a few years back.

Back home by 2, I was given a message by the clerk who said Sister had called, asking me to send six more records and a bill. August had been chopping up some ground during my absence and we got about 500 or 600 onions set out before undertaking a few other little chores before supper.

I am enclosing, if I can find it, a letter from Ola Mae, --obviously a form letter which illustrates a distinctly "Wordsian" flavor, especially in the somewhat odd construction in the final paragraph. Just what the point of this letter may be isn't clear to me or why Rosedown should care one way or the other about bell ringing in the Cane River country. As to whatever may have happened to the photograph taken of the local bell I cannot imagine. Apparently it has not appeared in any publication as yet. Unless Rosedown is paying for the picture-taking, it would appear Ola Mae is losing money on that undertaking but, if so, it probably wouldn't be the first time that had happened I believe the letter is dated March 8 and was cancelled on March 14th from St. Francisville, suggesting Ola Mae may still be holding down publicity for the Rosedown people.

And now for a d.b. of correspondence and after that the Wild Mount in Berry Department and that will be it for Monday.....

00121

15402

Tuesday, March 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Occasional clouds, occasional sunshine with the thermometer fluctuating comparatively little, --52 for a low, 72 for a high on this last day of winter.

I thought it would be a pleasant gesture in the direction of Primavera, to present her with a view of at last some of the garden laid out when she arrives at 9:22 tomorrow morning. And so I spent the better part of the afternoon today in laying out the first two parterres in the Ghana garden that will be planted this year. I got some more onion sets into their proper places and a dozen tomato and bell pepper plants in their proper rows. Before breakfast I shall plant a few rows of golden bantam corn and some collards, radishes, beets and lettuce. And mentioning lettuce reminds me to say that I have been enjoying lettuce from the garden all winter where I let several plants go to seed last autumn and somehow most of it has either survived or re-activated dormant seeds and tomorrow I shall plant more. Personally I prefer the lush leaves plucked before spraying season begins but it takes some doings to get lettuce to flourishing before spraying time. As a matter of fact, the spraying of the pecan trees before they start putting out their leaves means the lettuce must thrive, if planted now, before a month hence when the pecans beginning unfolding their leaves. They will get another spraying a month later just before the airplanes start on the cotton. I suppose the insecticides are washed off the lettuce leaves readily enough but it seems to me they taste fresher if they don't have to be scrubbed too much before using them for salads.

I. S. Willard 'phoned me this afternoon, telling me the new aquarium in Hatchifetches and asking me if she might not come down and take me to town to inspect the place. I told her I had dropped in to take a quick look at the place and I thought she was going to drop the 'phone when she heard I had been to town. We agreed it would be a pleasant place to inspect together "a little later in the season". She said she had taken several snapshots of the building just as it was being started, having been concentrating on the site where once an Indian mound had stood. I think the mound was gone long before the aquarium was dreamed of but I. S. W. said she did find several pieces of Indian artifact on the spot when the dredging for the foundations was going on.

She mentioned two invitation in the morning mail, --



12405

15403

one for April 4th, I believe, when some organization in New Orleans is entertaining some distinguished people. On that occasion Carl Carmer will be guest speaker. His wife, the former Mavy Black, is a New Orleans girl and I'm wondering if Carl will take the opportunity to explore the Cane River country before or after the Crescent City festivities. I find myself wondering, too, if he will be calling on Carolyn while in New Orleans. It seems to me she told me he had advanced money to her on a book she had talked about doing. Something tells me she never got around to write that volume.

I. S. W. also mentioned receiving an invitation to the Gridiron Dinner in Baton Rouge about April 24th. She said she thought she might attend that one, too, since one always meets such interesting people, quite aside from the fact that she had several things to do in the Baton Rouge area. I did not tell her that Mrs. Walker is planning to attend the Gridiron dinner. I believe both ladies would be just as happy not knowing the other was attending and, if they don't know it, it is quite possible neither lady will see the other unless looking for each other.

One of my neighbors living down the road a few houses, sent me word today that at their house they had a pretty little chicken, just hatched out by a pigeon. It seems the foster mother is lavishing parental affection on the new offspring just as though it were her own. I rather the by chick must be a bantam for it doesn't seem possible that a pigeon either would or could keep warm the egg of a chicken for three weeks which, of course, is the period of incubation. It is said the foster mother keeps an eye on the little one and tucks it under her wing when night descends and the little one seeks the warmth and protection of its mama. I must take time out to journey down to see this phenomenon, not only because I am interested in such an unexpected relationship but also because it will please the neighbors who took the trouble to send me word.

I was to say as in how much I appreciate little Miss Lee's kindness in sending a clipping about Robert de Montisquieu which I have re-read with so much interest. Cornelia Otis Skinner handled the Guy de Maupassant so adeptly in *La Belle Epoque* but Comte Robert was not the type for her facile pen but it obviously was for the present biographer. And now I must turn to some Wild Mount in Berries and that will be it for this last day of winter.....

12405

15404

Wednesday, March 20th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with a promise of rain. Thermometer's low last night was 66, today's high 76.

I assume Primavera made her bow at 9:22 this morning in spite of the fact that the Hatchiteches radio station announced at 7 o'clock this morning that Spring would arrive, not at 9:22 but at 7:22, suggesting that Spring fever must have struck the local station. Be that as it may, subsequent Louisiana radio stations reported that Spring actually arrived at 9:22 and that plantation bells rang up and down the major waterways from the Gulf to the Texas-Arkansas border.

I know not how the other plantation bells along Cane River sounded because, first of all, I was too busy with the Melrose bell to listen for others and, second, Magnolia plantation to the south and Oakland to the north are at least five miles or more away and their sounds wouldn't probably be heard such a distance as especially as the local one was making plenty of noise on its own hook.

I think I had better do a column about today's doings on the part of the birds. I forgot to tell the peacocks about the arrival of Spring and actually was not thinking of peacocks at all when I grabbed the bell rope and got the sound waves sailing. But the peacocks didn't fail to let me know they were in on the festivities and with the first peal of the bell and all the succeeding ones, they let out noises, strong enough to wake the dead. The combination of such unlike sounds didn't exactly produce a Tchaikovsky's "1812" but the racket issuing from bell and birds suggested an orchestration the like of which I had never heard before and at the same time suggested to my imagination that Peter Ilyevitch would love the whole business.

Perhaps I shall work in something about the



10121

15405

baby chick and its foster-mama, the pigeon in the column with the peacock-bell serenade for immediately after the bell ringing, I went down the road to the Moran cabin where Carrie, Celeste's former servant, came out to see me and invite me into the yard to view of feathered phenomenon there. It was entirely as astonishing as in the first report I had received. I was surprised when Carrie opened the covering because I thought the pigeon might fly out but Carrie said the place is always open and the pigeons fly in and out as they please. There were two pigeons in the coop, one very busy on her nest and never stirred, the other occasionally marching from one corner to another in the coop, the young chick right at her heels and always ready to scurry back under the foster-mama's wings at the first chance. Carrie picked up the foster-mama first and handed it to me to see. It was very tame and hopped back into the cage when I held it out on my opened hand. Then the baby chick, robust and sizeable, was handed to me for a good look and when I replaced it in the pen, it snuggled under the protective wings of the pigeon awaiting it in a corner.

Back home, I recalled how the guineas and the woodpeckers had been tuning up for the arrival of Spring but I shall have to mention them in a column later.

August and I laid out the balance of the parterres, got the markers firmly placed and chopped and loosened various edges the plough had missed, both of us hopping and jumping about in fancy footwork as though engaged in a game of musical chairs. I discovered I really had a good appetite by dinner time and thought I would pick up some radio news immediately afterward. My plans did not carry through, however, as people from Spokane, Washington, arrived just as I reached Yucca after dinner and they were followed by some Houston people. While the latter were here, somebody called from town to request a tour from some people from Menatana. It was nearly 4:30 before I could get back to gardening and, after supper, it was after dark before any secretaries showed up.

There was too much station to get my news at 8 o'clock and now at 9:30 it is raining but after a few loud crashes of thunder, the cold front without any notice, ble cold, must have passed and perhaps I shall catch up with what has been going on in the world at 10 o'clock.

The leaves on the Chinese magnolias are coming out briskly now and I'm holding the thought that the first day of Spring in Lyme had its happy moments, too.....

10121

15406

Thursday  
Wednesday, March 21st, 1966.

Memorandum:

The thermometer appears to be stuck in the 40's, moving little if any, either up or down. It drizzled a half inch last night and another half inch today. We may look for the same thing on the morrow with a chance to a dab of sunshine Saturday, I hope.

Vegetables don't grow much when the temperature is at 40. If it doesn't get much lower, the new ones set out to add pepper plants may survive. The plants are so sturdy, it seems aptly they may fold up but perhaps they will make it and so get far ahead of those to be planted later.

I suppose everybody was interested in hearing the Rockefeller statement about not pushing his candidacy for the Republican nomination. Perhaps there is a chance he may be drafted in Miami at the convention but that seems a wane hope. I should be happier if Nixon were not to be the Republican standard bearer but at the moment he seems to be the think..... interruption.....

The interruption came in the form of a 'phone call from Ethel Holleman, of all people, of the Alexandria Town Talk. She wants me to do an article about Red River threatening to break into and occupy the old bed of Red River, known as Cane River since 1832. She explained that the Alexandria feature writer came to Natchit and got some kind of a story but didn't realize that there was any relationship between Red and Cane Rivers and she wants me to do an article that will set the whole thing straight and she will cast about and find photographs of Cane River places, using them to illustrate the article.

This all sounds simple enough on the surface but since la Holleman has nothing to do about the special features section of the Town Talk, and since she is rather well known for unfounded dislikes, it may well be she is trying to put a booby into the path of the regular staff correspondents. At the same time, Mrs. Chopin contributes news but not features to Town Talk and although she may not know anything about doing an article about Red and Cane River, she could certainly knock one off after I have finished



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15407

talking with her later tonight. The trouble of contacts with people as wacky as Ethel Helleman is the amount of damage one might unknowingly inflict on some innocent bystander. She started off by asking me if I wouldn't do a column about the subject, --certainly a timely topic since it does appear RedRiver is about to switch back into the former channel up GrandEcore way. But my columns are already written for this week and nextweek and I'm not going to gum up the works by yanking some out of line and inserting something else. And so much for such flubdubbery.

Tomorrow being Friday, the Catholic ladies from Natchitoches Parish who can arrange it will go to the annual three day retreat at Mary Hill, somewhere behind Pineville, opposite Alexandria on the same aforementioned Red River. Among those attending will be my 9 o'clock coffee companion who has already urged me to keep an eye on the merchant-plotter during her absence... How she expects anyone to keep an eye on such a volatile figure, I wouldn't know. Anyone who is capable of keeping within eye-shot of either the husband or the wife in that menage has better vision than anyone I know.

With considerable assistance today I tried to unscramble the contents of a big envelope that came to hand from Sister day before yesterday. The envelope bore the notation of "Printed Material" on the outside but the inside contained a couple of checks, three or four pages of hand written letter or letters, personal correspondence addressed to her at Shreveport, etc., etc, not to mention several folders. The woman, to be sure, is insane but that fact would scarcely have saved her from paying a fat fine had the Post Office discovered she was using 3rd class mailing rates to send 1st class mail. One of the checks was for J. H. in payment of some meat pies or something she had ordered through the store. The other check was made out to me, a \$90. check to cover a \$45 purchase secured prior to another purchase of records made by phone and already forwarded together with an invoice covering both first and second orders and thereby confusing the whole account in a fine mare's nest. Quelle bag, alers.

Ho-hum....and now I must knock off some mail and perhaps call it a day. I still haven't heard any honking of wildgeese but I did track down two martins today.....

30121

15408

Friday, March 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

I thought I had my radio set on a nearby station at 5 o'clock this morning but I immediately concluded I must be on a Chicago one for the announcer was talking about the snow that had fallen during the night. Just before folding up my beard last night or rather this morning at 3 o'clock, I stepped out on the gallery to see if any stars were visible but it was still drizzling. At 5:30 when I finally he-stirred myself and looked out of doors, I was astonished to see a landscape of white. Fortunately we received only about an inch or two but even so, I was quite unprepared for it. According to the radio, Briarwood received 5 inches and whether that melted or not, I wouldn't know but this afternoon the clouds lifted and the sun broke through and the snow vanished before night.

The nicest thing about today was the mail which brought Wednesday's message from Lyme together with all the clippings which interested me in every detail. How thoughtful of little Miss Lee to have sent along the Contact item. Two weeks ago I was quite unhappy around the middle. I thought perhaps a spider had taken a nip just above the naval base and some kind of strange stuff drained into the very center of the thing. Not only a belt but even the mere touch of the trousers was painful. I thought visitors would never leave on the following Sunday when Mrs. Walker and her friends came. Gradually I transferred my accusation from the spider to the allergy brought on by too many Contacts and I broke off taking them and worried through another week, surviving to be sure but unhappy with my raiment. But now that is all over, praise the Lord, and the information conveyed by the clipping confirms what I finally concluded was the cause of my couple weeks of discomfort.

I so much appreciate the particulars regarding the residences of the several politicians, none of which I had known about as to the location of the apartment where two of them dwell plus the former wife of one of them and until I explored the contents of the letter, I had never realized that Bobby had an apartment in Manhattan. I had heard about his Long Island establishment and somehow I assumed he might make use of the family apartment at the Carlyle on Madison Ave.



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15409

Had little Miss Lee not mentioned the news items extracted from the local paper, --particulars about the Madame Aubin Reque house, etc., I should never have known about them. As for the brevity about the guest speaker's notice in the local paper, that was probably due to a couple of circumstances, the first being that the article was already long and secondly the reporter covering the doings is an old buddy of Charles Cunningham who has always been beating the drum to persuade first Charles and then the new publisher to keep the column out of the Times because once the column had been contributed to the Enterprise, surprisingly enough was smart enough to know that many of his subscribers took the paper for just one reason but circulation was of no interest to the reporter.

The best news in the Lyle letter had to do with little Miss Lee taking time out for a day and, I hope, for the balance of the week. I am holding the thought that the tenure of office may be running out soon and that little Miss Lee doesn't get too exhausted before the termination day arrives.

I have a request from Lestan in the matter of asking little Miss Lee to do a bit of shopping on Lestan's part in the matter of a natal day gift. When in town earlier in the week, Lestan, whose primary purpose was doing a bit of shopping, was disappointed in what was not to be found although he had heard something he had had in mind had been obtainable the week before. And so he is now passing along the shopping job to another for the moment in full hope that something more personal may be forthcoming a little later.

And so here it is Friday, the beginning of the weekend that 7 days hence will mark another weekend of real significance, the celebration of a natal day that I am hoping will be most delightful in every particular for the celebrant with whom in spirit I shall be celebrating, too.....

11421

15410

Sunday, March 24th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 40's and it would be higher, were it not for the cold breeze out of the Northwest.

The nicest thing about Saturday was the post bringing the pages about the "situation" as revealed by the article by Hedding Carter, 3rd. There were too many pilgrims on Saturday but in spite of that and at early and late hours, I was so fortunate as to have secretarial service so could enjoy not only the Carter article but the re-reading of some of little Miss Lee's recent letters, all of which brought sunshine to my soul.

In re-reading the letter of the 14th or perhaps the 13th, --Wednesday, I discovered as I have found to be true before, that a secretary for the first reading had skipped an entire paragraph, to wit, the one announcing a phone call that guaranteed freedom for little Miss Lee for the balance of the week so far as the business front was concerned and in that good news, I rejoice. In the same paragraph which had been skipped was a reference to the state of health in the household of the nearest neighbors and the decision that everybody under that roof would withdraw from the conventional activities of the business world. I shall be holding the thought that the health of both parties may have been put back on the high road to normalcy. I shall be holding the thought, too, that everybody may readily find a satisfactory re-adjustment to life, now that the former routine has been terminated. Some people are able to make such adjustments with grace and a measure of happiness to themselves. I hope it may be so in the present instance.

The fact that the secretary did skip the paragraph just mentioned reminds me that in case some statement should not be referred to in making responses, it is always well to make note of such omissions in the responses since in that way skipped sections may be noted forthwith.

I talked with Natalie for a moment this morning. She reports, although nobody knows it as yet, that she is going to have the new job, more or less created for her, in the library rather than in the continuation of the English Department bracket and she seems happy about that. She mentioned that today's Alexandria Town Talk carried a Lestan article under the title, "Natchitoches, Oldest Louisiana Town" or some such stupidity since the article was about Red and Cape River. They did not use pictures for the article. I suppose I shall get a copy of the article in a day or two and shall s along.



01121

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Mention of "Twelve Years a Slave" and failure to find it listed as yet convinces me that L. S. U. Press must be running behind time in the matter of release. It was my understanding it was for late February or early this month and accordingly I had asked a copy be forwarded, prior to release date if possible, so I might get it off to Lyne before natal day but that obviously has fall outside the realm of possibility. But it will be coming along eventual I suppose, and then we shall be able to see what we shall see.

Last night Blythe 'phoned from Alexandria, asking if I could let her have a half dozen records which she wanted to have for gifts. She said she had recently returned from Houston where she went to attend her grandson's wedding. Everything was lovely, she reported.

The merchant-planter 'phoned me this morning at 8 today breakfast was ready. As I do not have breakfast on Sundays, today's go at coffee, prepared by the master's own hand, was something of a double innovation. It seems that Rosetta, their cook, must have been given Sunday off on this go round. She comes on Sundays only when there are guests or when the mistress is absent. Last week, the DonRegards were here and so Rosetta was on the job but as only the merchant-planter and I were here, we could make out very nicely both in the morning and at noon.

Right after dinner, J. H. Henry was joined by J. H. Williams and both gentlemen journeyed down to Hot Wells for a bath as dispensed by that spa.

I saw both Celeste and J. H. at supper, Celeste having returned from her Mary Hill retreat with the sniffles which she encountered on Friday night and which persisted throughout the weekend. I gather it was bound to have cost something of a pall over her enthusiasm for the services. She reported there were 45 ladies from Natchitoches Parish present, four of the ladies being from Ile Brevelle, ladies of color, Mesdames Roque, Conant and so on.

Inez Chaplin attended the Mary Hill retreat and in the period devotions asked the priest in attendance, she inquired if anything in the Bible showed Christ had a sense of humor.

I held a retreat with my reading machine last night, having another go at the Education of Henry Adams and liking everything as much as before.....

01121

15412

Monday, March 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with the thermometer trying to edge upward from the mid 30's last night to the upper 60's today with the promise of the 70's for the morrow. In short, it looked like Spring today and will feel like it tomorrow.

Except for a couple of batches of pilgrims, most of my day was spent at gardening. Quite by chance I happened to pass by Yucca around 4 o'clock to get some more seeds at just the moment a telephone call came through. It was Station WDS U New Orleans. They want to do a full length documentary in color "with the sensitivity the subject deserves", hanging the story on Clementine Hunter and Leston. What a brother and sister act that ought to make I pointed out there were several factors to be considered before jumping into such a project, not the least of which is the fact that March is no time to attempt such a thing, late April being the earliest possible time, foliage wise, and that June would be better for floral colorings. I also added that the calendar for family in residence must also be consulted and that they would do well to consult some data I gave them and call be back later in the week. They mentioned that the film, complete in many details would be used on a nation wide hook-up in color. Well, we shall see what we shall see.

Today marked the first use of the power lawn mower this year and its use was over due, what with clover jumping up at a great rate. Come to think of it, I might get the operator to run the mower over the back of my neck to give me a shearing since my perruque seems to be tryin' to out-do the clover in growth.

My 9 o'clock coffee companion is still nursing her cold. She planned to dress and get out into the sunshine in the afternoon but I don't know if she made it or not. She reported that last night after they had folded up they received two 'phone calls. The first was from Sister who was obviously hitting the bottle and talking non-sense. The second call came through just after they had flattened out again, the second call being from Shreveport from Sister's daughter-in-law who said she thought J. H. ought to know that Sister has been on a tear for several days. What J. H. was expected to do about that, I wouldn't know. It is said further



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that Doetsie-Baby is going to Dayton, Ohio, to take a job there in the Army store, leaving this coming weekend and that Sister is driving up with her daughter and flying back. It is readily understandable with such potentials in battling the battle and generally flying out, I am likely to think twice before making any dates with WDSU since she can never anticipate which way the Mexican Jumping Bean is going to wobble.

Mrs. Chopin just called. She had jotted down some things she wanted to put into her farewell letter to the members of the Louisiana Press Women's Association from the Presidency of which she stepped down a week ago. She has a gift for doing such type of messages but seems a little timid about sending out such things before consulting someone about the contents. The message sounded perfect to me and such an honest opinion seemed to give her just the tincture of assurance to get the thing going.

She mentioned that one of her friends, Mrs. Rowe of the Times, had told her Mrs. Walker is planning to leave Natchitoches early in June, heading out for Florida bag and baggage with her mother if she receives an appointment to one or another of the colleges down that way. Her son is expected to graduate from High School about June 1st and where he plans to spend the summer, I haven't heard. Perhaps he will start college during the summer session, --so many freshmen seem to do that these days, or, perhaps, he will join the marines as he once mentioned as a possibility. I think the Florida move is foolish since she will never be any happier in one place than another and she does have a pleasant home in Natchitoches but one does not tell people that happiness is where one makes it and not at some magical spot at the end of a rainbow.

I suppose it's a big night in the cabins tonight.

Robert and Clyde Anthony finished their three years in Angola as of this morning. Bookie got up at 4 o'clock, drove down and picked them up, arriving back home about 10 o'clock this morning. George Harris who was sent to prison at the same time, had been transferred to Baton Rouge and somebody went down to pick him up today, too. None of them will resume residence at this bend of the river but rather will probably find plantation work across Red River in Montgomery Area had been made for Robert and Clyde by the sister, Doreatha, for them to go directly to Houston where Doreatha's two sons are with the police department, --change of State and the wings of their nephews to protect them should have been ideal but Clyde, in particular, has always resisted the advantageous. So things turn and may it be a better world all around.....

15414

Tuesday, March 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

All sunshine and starlight, thermometer in the 70's.

I am happy to report the tomato and pepper plants, rescued from the snow on Friday morning, are flourishing after being re-planted in their original places under the sky.

Most of my day witnessed little accomplished out of doors, --Me proposing and pilgrims disposing as to how one may employ his time.

I had several 'phone calls to make this morning which seemed important when I got around to dial the first number. The call never went through what with first one and then another interrupt and then a little after 10 o'clock, James appeared, remaining for dinner. He brought along a clipping of an article by Herman Deutsch, --mention of "Shadows of Old New Orleans" and some reference to a forthcoming volume by the offspring of Mark and Mary Bradford. I shall enclose same if I can find it along with the article in Sunday's Town Talk about the rivers cane and Red but entitled "Natchitoches, Oldest Town in Louisiana or some such inappropriate headline. I think I shall do a column on the same subject just for the satisfaction of being able to give it my own headline.

Before James left, J. H. 'phoned from the store to say that Deborah Abranson and some lady from California, enroute from Baton Rouge to a Library convention at Shreveport, had just stopped at the store and were asking for me. He had sent them over to see Celeste where I might find them.

The California lady reminded me of a younger edition of Essie Mae, the latter now being 85 according to Deborah. As for Deborah herself, she looked younger than when I first laid eyes on her some 30 years ago. I wonder how she does it.

We chatted a few minutes across the fence and after that we made a little tour of the gardens for the benefit of the California lady. It was pleasant seeing them but as they did not bring hoe or spade with them, the gardening had planned did not progress much.



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Among today's messages from the outside world was an inquiry from the Squire's lady, asking if she might come to see me on Friday afternoon. She might but I am inclined to regret visitations of too extended length right now when I am trying to get the parterres in the Ghana garden planted. I can't recall last when I was honored with a visit, --sometime during the autumn, I guess. I did not ask if her lady-in-waiting will accompany her but I am hoping so since it may be easier to ease a couple out of the front gate the sooner than merely one.

Just after dinner, J. H. 'phoned from the store to tell me about Deborah's presence and not five minutes after her departure, the clerk called from the store to say some ladies from Houston, currently stopping at Hedges Gardens, hoped to see me. It turned out that they were not friends, as had been assumed, but rather were friends of friends and thus they had proceeded over here on the strength of making contact. They were pleasant enough but the planting, of course, had to wait until they were gone and by then the sun had just about departed, too.

Although the river must still be somewhat on the chilly side, the spirit of Spring and the impulse for fishing is laying hold on local residents and the youngsters of the neighborhood are forever putting in an appearance to ask if they can get fishing poles. Years ago I planted bamboo in advantageous spots along the margin of the river for ever a mile on both sides of the stream and there are thickets of bamboo resulting from that initial planting. These sources for poles come in very handy for lots of people but somebody started the rumor that while the "bamboo" on the river bank is alright, "it ain't all that lucky like that what grows in Lest n's garden". I suppose there may be another factor about the latter, too, and that is the fact that Lestan has a saw and a pair of clippers that he is want to lend the would-be fisherfolk

James said he stopped in front of the big house on Saturday afternoon to snap a picture of the big oak in a particular light. He said Joe came over from the store to chat with him, Joe whom I haven't seen in months. James said he was all affability and told him about the new house he was anxious to start building but that he couldn't find any builders in town who would work for him. Joe found that odd but James and I didn't but we could laugh which was more than Joe could.....

15416

27  
Wednesday, March 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Pair in the 50 - 70 range.

Remarkable to relate, there were no pilgrims today or at least, I didn't see any. It is true there were a few phone calls but, happily, the connections were so poor that all callers gave up trying to understand anything that somehow seemed to sound like voices attempting to penetrate a busy buzz saw. Net result: I got some gardening done which was just what I wanted to do.

The two projects on which I concentrated most today were the driving of shortened fence post into the parterres to support the horizontal bamboo poles on which the tomatoes may grow to maximum advantage and the other and quite different operation had to do with disposing of a fallen cedar just East of the summer dining room. The latter job is tiresome because the cedar is hopelessly entangled with the endless vines of an ancient wisteria that cutting into the cedar requires endless cutting of the cables of the wisteria before one may reach the trunk of the tree itself. I did not attempt to finish this job but I did keep three men busy chopping and sawing through the vines and tomorrow we shall perhaps reach the tree itself which will then be sawed into blocks and hauled into some more convenient space where boards may be made from the sections of the trunk. The cedar should supply ample material for the fashioning of a chest of some sort for the storing of woollens for months are said to avoid the aroma of cedar..

Another chore awaiting my attention has to do with the canine segment of the population. Three or four dogs belonging to nobody, --I suppose they have been dropped in the road by somebody wanting to get rid of them, and they hit upon the bindery, or the space under the bindery, to make their



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headquarters by day and a point from which sorties may be made at night. In the first place, I have had enough trouble with the Shreveport dog on its occasional visits when it decides to knock out the peacock population. In the second place, the new-comers can tell readily enough where the cats partake of their food and they explore such places for possible lanyaps. Since Saturday night, the dogs have been mousing this way every night at 9:30, barking and taking passes at the cats. The latter take to whatever is highest from the ground and as the two old armchairs on the front gallery provide just that kind of vantage, they scurry atop the aforesaid furniture, knocking off big old metal containers and like stuff stored there, sending them to the brick pavement with a great clatter which sets up renewed howling from the dogs, all of which combines to make the night hideous. All the cabin people already have too many dogs of their own and it is accordingly impossible to give away this new batch. They tell me in the pastures the unowned dogs are frequently bringing down the young calves and by making use of that approach, perhaps I may be able to bring pressure on the store to eliminate the local ones if hunting parties may be organized to dispose of the marauders in the pastures.

About 7 o'clock this evening I had a struggle with the telephone that was at once frustrating and wearing. Los Angeles was calling in quest of a Hunter canvas or at least that is what I concluded from an incredible amount of shouting, attempts at better connections and repetition of scraps of conversations by operators between here and the west coast. It seems remarkable that I never got the name of the city whence the call had been put through. I never did get the name of the person placing the call. The word, painting, somehow reached me but that was about all. The buzzing of bees in my receiver sounded less like bees buzzing than a nail factory going full tilt. I concluded the effort by asking some operator to suggest to the caller that a letter be sent since I could make nothing out of the conversation. And just to think American Tel. and Tel. boasted a two billion dollar profit for the past year's operations.....

15418

Thursday, March 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, humid with only about a 10 percent variation in temperature, --60 to 70.

As we move closer to birthday time, I find myself searching about with greater persistency to learn how atmospheric conditions are shaping up at Lyme

It goes without saying I am holding the thought the weekend may be everything one hopes for it and, should there be Spring showers, may there be oceans of sunbeams indoors by way of special happiness for little Miss Lee.

Today's post surprised me only in that there were so many minor pieces I had not expected and one or two communications such as from NBC- WKSU, did not appear. I am glad to have had an opportunity to give thought about the documentary and have come to the conclusion that WDSU and NBC might be well advised to concentrate their cameras on the Cane River country as a whole rather than concentrating on one particular bend of the river. Neither the place nor the artist needs any additional publicity since pilgrims are already more numerous than can be accommodated while the artist, in view of her ever mounting popularity, finds herself so overloaded with orders she cannot possibly keep abreast of them.

My 'phone continues in partial paralysis which provides the virtue of brief shouting into the instruments. There was an hilarious act this noon when I. S. Willard called. It seems the bridge in the center of Hatchiteches, hard by Petit Tern is having its concrete bannisters removed by steel drills, the bannisters to be replaced by ironwork guards which will enable people crossing the bridge in cars to see the river and landscape below to greater advantage. I. S. Willard began her conversation remarking upon this civic undertaking which made noise enough



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her house to make hearing anything on the 'phone almost impossible. Adding to that up-rear the "built-in" din making strange noises in my 'phone, the results, conversationwise, were remarkable, each speaking shouting and screaming against the drilling beyond the instrument and the clatter inside the instrument and neither of us could make out much of anything that the other was saying.

I was glad to hear from Sterling Cook. His letter arrived by the same postman who took away the package I had made up for him, --the Baptisin' of little Miss Hunter which he had ordered some time back. I have no idea how far Stone Hollow may be from Oxford where he devotes his days to the University but something tells me that he might do well to maintain a niche in town during the snowy months, reserving his place in the country just for the milder months of the year.

I took a half hour off tonight to listen to what, for me at least, was the first political speech of the 1968 political campaign as set forth by Richard Nixon. If it had a title, it was perhaps "1968 Political Campaign Speeches". The general tenor was one of sweet reasonableness. It was presented with the usual generalities of subject matter that possibly must characterize most political speeches. Mr. Nixon persuasively conveyed the notion that he is opposed to sin and is in favor of a respect for motherhood. Surely few listeners could have objected to such a stand. Avoiding the explicit is probably a cardinal point for most politicians to nourish. Although I didn't pay very strict attention, I must say I didn't encounter any suggested solving of any of the many problems he mentioned. Perhaps he hasn't any solutions to offer. There was no mention of his wife's cloth coat as opposed to fur wraps which he flaunted with such energy when running for Vice President a few years back. I suppose such flourishes will develop somewhere along the route running from March to November. I am glad to have spent half an hour paying attention to the eye-wash being dished out and, whenever possible between now and November, I am going to try to employ chance half hours to better advantage than concentrating on political speeches.....

15420

15420

Friday, March 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 60 - 80 range.

The nicest thing about this lovely day was the letter from Lyme as of Wednesday. There were quite a few letters in the post, --WDSU, Esther, Ellen Lockett and so on. Circumstances, however, prevented me from so much as opening any of the latter and I was unable to finish the Scourby clipping which I am impatient to undertake first thing on the natal day I shall be celebrating on the morrow. The other letters can wait without any impatience on my part, glad as I shall be to run through them whenever pilgrims don't cancel out secretaries, a more and more difficult possibility in these lovely days of Spring when so many people obviously have taken to the road and so many of them toward this general area.

I am so glad that little Miss Lee is planning to make something out of the birthday greetings, receipt of which was so charmingly acknowledged. Whatever may be the selection, I trust it will be something providing a sunbeam of delight as coming straight from the heart.

I cannot say how much I appreciate the charming lines quoted in the Wednesday letter. I am jotting them down on a card which I shall keep readily to hand so one secretary or another from time to time may bring them over and over again to me.

And thanks much for telling me about the new Quaterze volume. It certainly sounds promising and quite different from the text in the Mitford volume, the text in the latter being primarily a collection of pieces, some light some dark, that when properly assembled provide a mosaic rather than a painted portrait, perhaps more of the times of Quaterze rather than a portrait of the sovereign, valuable as aides but not intended perhaps as a full length picture of the man. I shall be so interested to learn your opinion of the work. Somewhere in my memory rings at the name of the author, Wolf, but I cannot place it although it seems to me I encountered it during the past few months but not in relation to this biography which is all news to me.

I want to say, too, how much I treasure the confidence as indicated by the sharing of local vignettes which, because of their savor



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shading, nevertheless do tend to throw into brighter and  
loulier relief the wisdom and willpower of those one viewing them  
closest into such magnificent high lights of an  
artist, so wonderfully gifted in an ability to keep the shadows just  
where they belong and the sunshine forever straight ahead. My admira-  
tion is altogether beyond my ability to express in words  
but I have no doubt mental telepathy conveys my feelings.

So far as getting anything worth while done today, I  
have nothing to say. Interruptions had a way of cluttering  
things up, morning, noon and night. According to  
previous appointment, Kay appeared this afternoon, telephoning at  
noon to say she would be later in arriving than she had  
planned. That was understandable but, of course, I  
couldn't proceed with strenuous gardening in 80 degree  
temperature and hope to appear passable, were I to have jumped  
from the hose to the hose to effect a presentable  
appearance and so gardening lapsed while I fiddled.

She brought along enough food to feed a regiment and I shall  
share it in part with some of my friends, --fruit without end  
including three baskets of strawberries, vegetables in extensive  
amounts including onions with their green stems on which will afford  
me a nice omelette on the morrow, avocados by the half  
dozen, three different kinds of bread, hearts of celery, bell  
peppers, bananas, apples, pound cake, cookies, fancy cold slaw,  
icecream and Heaven knows what all. She also brought  
along a book from which she read me at some length,  
Random House publication, it being a  
biography of that Danish lady who lived for years in Kenya  
and wrote so interestingly, --"Out of Africa" and so on.  
The book has lots of illustrations which I didn't get to see  
very well but they struck me as being quite entertaining  
to harmonize thereby with the biography itself.

My old friend, Will Rogers, died this afternoon, --one of  
those rare geniuses who never got beyond the cotton patch but  
was, nevertheless, as gifted a deer of things as I ever knew.  
Perhaps it was as well that he died alone, his wife, a  
mental case, being on a visit in a cabin next door, one of his  
ground daughters being in the cabin with him but  
she was elsewhere in the cabin because she simply had to watch  
a TV story of her special fancy. Two of Will's boys had been secretaries  
but although on the river, were not at home this afternoon. Will  
is one of those characters one will be enchanted to contact again  
on the other shore.

And now I shall turn to doing a column and then calling  
it a day, such a happy day, thanks to the letter from Lyme.....

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twig of  
blue - purple wisteria

Sunday, March 31st, 1968.

Memorandum:

I can't remember if March came in like a lion or not but  
he certainly goes out like a lamb. With the thermometer  
running from 60 to 80, dawn presented herself from mostly  
blue to thin scarves of white veils and 2 hours later the sun  
was out and today was duplicated the same decors.

On natal day morning, I set aside the special homemade biscuits  
of which the maccocks and pheasants are especially fond but  
before offering them their breakfast, I plucked a  
fine bouquet, the color scheme more or less harmonizing with  
the sky, snowy ribbon grass for framework and lovely blue-purple  
wisteria. It sounds like an odd combination but it turned  
out beautifully, making my heart the gladder the entire weekend  
as it vibrates in its tall white vase, --remember --here on  
my desk, each delicate blossoms of the wisteria clusters  
vibrating in unison with every touch of my fingers to the  
keys of this machine. The fragrance is as  
delightful as the appearance of the bouquet itself and something  
tells me that were she here, little Miss Lee would love  
it, too.

The whole day turned out happily and, as though  
by special dispensation, there were no pilgrims. James dropped  
in for an hour on Saturday afternoon between 3 and 4, bringing  
a copy of the current Holiday magazine with its three  
pretty pictures in color of scenes at the Grand Trianon.

Save for the spiritual presence of little Miss Lee,  
I supped alone at 7. By pre-arrangement, there was  
music, selected earlier in the day, --an all Feyer program  
of my favorite pieces and played, as you know, with ex-  
quisite artistry. As birthday suppers, so, this one  
was modest enough but entirely to my liking and  
somehow I felt it satisfied my spiritual companion:

a Spanish omelette an avocado salad with hearts of celery and  
ripe olives, whole wheat bread, the slice about the size of a beau-  
dollar, topped with pimento cheese spread cubes of pound cake over-



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spread with ice cream and the whole pleasantly awash with fresh, partially mashed strawberries, followed by, after the things had been put away and George Feyers fingers still making sparkling music, a long slow creme de cassis --and that was it. Naturally along the way, I thought more than once of Louis Deur de Baviere and his famous dinners, sometimes for Louis Quaterza, sometimes for Marie Antoinette, hoping all the while that my unseen guest was enjoying the food and not quite famished at the conclusion. It goes without saying I shall be looking forward to an account of little Miss Lee's celebration of that very specila day and holding the thought that she, too, found enchantment in her own particular fare and her surroundings.

The weekend provided me with ample secretarial assistance and I was particularly grateful for the clipping about Alexander Scourby. I was impressed by the success he is enjoying and equally surprised to learn he had a middle name and such an unexpected one, --Euclid.

I shall enclose the letter from WDSU together with my response. On giving the matter of the documentary centered on the local gardens and buildings, I came to the conclusion that the project would require sufficient concentration to make it a job, easily enough handled by itself but too exhausting in the matter of imponderables, --a sudden appearance of Shreveport in what condition nobody could anticipate. I think an interesting film could be made from the air, various shots of the several gardens and building, plus other scenes from the air of Cane River with emphasis on the Church of the Children of Strangers, Little River churches, etc., with the artist at her easle at the same time painting one or another of such scenes. As for being responsible for a two day concentration of director and crew, operating within the gardens in confusion that would obtain were Shreveport about, that is rather more than I care to hazard at the moment.

The Squire confided that although his lady had not mentioned it to him, it is his understanding she is considering the purchase of the Perrault house, --I'm not sure of the spelling. It was the dwelling of the Perraults when Pecan Park was started as a pecan orchard. The house is sort of 1880 but its location is going to be mighty close to a new highway and bridge being planned, just below Pat's house. A legal adviser will come up from New Orleans on Tuesday but it is doubted that he knows anything about the proposed new highway.

So turneth of natal day weekend. I hold the thought it was lovely in Lyme.....

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Monday, April 1st, 1968.

Memorandum:

The thermometer got stuck at 60, remaining there all day under sprinkley skies and will remain there under sprinkley skies tonight, too, the weather man says.

As for myself, I liked the cloudiness and the sprinkle that began about 7 o'clock for I had a hundred and fifty tomato plants I wanted to set out. As a matter of fact, I did get them set out, finishing the job as the sprinkling began and the absence of sun and the presence of rain was just perfect.

Two or three times on the hour today, I made it a point to tune in on the radio to find out what I could about the impending weather but, of course, got no where, what with so many of the major net work stations devoting special programs about the political twist that came to the fore so unexpectedly in the final sentences of President Johnson's speech last night, taking himself out of this year's Presidential contest.

Before the nomination of J. F. K. and I knew not how long before that, it was evident to everyone in Washington, of course, that there was no love lost between L. B. J. and the Kennedys, especially between Linden and Bobby. Both men have apparently tried to keep down the knowledge of this lack of harmony in their personalities but I found L. B. J.'s obvious sneer in today's response to Bobb's note to L. B. J. suggesting a meeting to discuss matters pertaining to keeping the Democratic framework solid. According to the radio, L. B. J. that he would meet with Bobby "at the Senator's convenience". I assume this phrase was made as an intentional slap, the implication being that it was the convenience of the Senator, not the President, that mattered.

I noticed from other reports that L. B. J., L. B. J. had intended when making his State of the Union speech early in January, to announce he would not run for the Presidency again but at the last minute changed his plan and held the announcement



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until March 31st. If this be true, it seems as though he might have avoided all the McCarthy - Kennedy barn-storming around the country, criticising his policies, if he had let them know confidentially that he would not be contending for the nomination, thereby saving all the splits in the party. I reminds me of the Henry Adams account of doings in the British Cabinet from 1861 to 1865 when Henry was private secretary to his father, Charles Francis Adams, Minister of the United States to London. As Adams remarked regarding the major politicians running the Government, Gladston, Russell, Palmerston and so on, neither young Adams or his father, the Minister, properly appraised the honesty and lack of honesty during their years in London and that Charles Francis Adams remained ignorant of the false positions played out by the Cabinet members, dying before the revealing personal papers of the Cabinet ministers had passed on some 20 years after the events in which all were concerned had long since been half forgotten. I suppose there is a lot of parallel legerdemain going on now in high places on the American scene that many a participant today may never understand very clearly before another couple of decades have come and gone.

On Sunday just as we sat down to table across the fence, there was a telephone call. Celeste answered it and handed it to J. H. who took up the conversation in another room. He was gone perhaps five minutes which seemed longer because of food was cooking. On his return he mentioned somebody had been in a car wreck up the road earlier in the day and some point about insurance or something had to be settled and the company had called him for information about the driver of the car. That was that and it was only this evening via a cabin grapevine that the car had been wrecked by the owner who was driving it, --J. H. himself.

In town there seems to be quite a scuffle going on about the bannisters across the main bridge, --a point I may have mentioned before. There was a meeting this afternoon with Mr. Ledbetter of the Chamber of Commerce on one side, the various civic organizations on the other, --Hysterical Ladies, Museum Contents, Colonial Hatchiteches and so on. They apparently have agreed the steel and chromium bannisters may be toned down a little and I. S. Willard presented sketches for the iron lacework to be welded to the shiny tubing, all of which sounds botchy enough but we shall see what we shall see.....

15426

Tuesday, April 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Thermometer in the 65 - 75 register with one inch of rain between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. as of last night with an inch and a half this morning between 7 and 9 o'clock.

Of course the vegetable garden found itself a young lake and my business was to get the ditches operating swiftly enough to take off the water before it drowned the tomato and pepper plants and the newly emerged beets, collards, radishes and so on. The work was arduous but successful and, although the rain stopped and the clouds thinned out, a bright sun did not break through to scald the tender young things just emerged from the water.

We are promised more rain for tonight and tomorrow with the temperature remaining in the 70's until tomorrow night when the thermometer will sag and the skies clear.

Although I reported difficulties with the 'phone last week, a representative of Southern Bell didn't make around until late this afternoon. The man volunteered his name as Anling or Andling, born and raised in Hatchiteches. I had never heard the name before. After fiddling around with the 'phone for 10 minutes and apparently putting it to rights, his eye caught the portrait of Father and Son over the fireplace as he turned to leave. He paused to gaze at it fixedly for a moment and then inquired if that might be a picture of my daddy beside the likeness of me. This 1968 sunshine must be giving me quite a tan and at the same time taking away the years at the same time if one takes me to be the 20 year old colored youth in the painting. More than once people have assumed the white gentleman might be a likeness of me but this is the first time anyone thought the youth of color was a smitten image of me.

Sometimes years go by without me ever having to summon a 'phone man but, come to think of it, I must say one or another of them really have changed to be



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on the unexpected side, as, for example, the one a number of years back who chanced to be working on the phone across the fence when Celeste was serving 9 o'clock coffee to three or four people and the phone man, through with his inside job, came out on the gallery to join us and proceeded to tell Miss Ramsey all about how to take a picture. As I recall both Carolyn and I got kicked out of the man's rigamarole but Celeste didn't like it one bit.

I. S. Willard called this evening. She had only recently learned that in making trans-Atlantic telephone calls, one may save a couple of dollars, -- \$7. versus \$9. -- if one does so after 5 p.m. Her son in Germany has a birthday coming up and she was trying to figure out what hour of the night she might be disturbing him at 5 p.m. or after, Matchiteches time. She mentioned in the column appearing today there was a reproduction of the letter sent Lestan by the Winnfield sorority about visiting Melrose. As I recall, it was about the middle of March that with a letter putting off that visit, a "Visit to Melrose" record was sent along. No acknowledgement of receipt has come through as yet although it is possible the appearance in the column of the original letter requesting a tour may come to hand.

I find it interesting that over the course of a year quite a few letters come to hand requesting information, seeds and what not and that in spite of the fact that such information is supplied and seeds sent immediately, always accompanied by a letter suggesting ways of planting to obtain maximum results, seldom if, indeed, ever, is there any acknowledgement of receipt of same.

I shall be curious to learn what numbers of people and what degree of enthusiasm obtained at the college tonight where Ray Charles, the blind pianist of color, is giving a concert. A few years back the Ku Kluxers and Citizens Council would have made such a performance impossible but I assume the Klux-ers are no longer able to exercise much influence in that direction.

And now I must tune in on the Wisconsin primary returns which, among other things, ought to show that Mr. Nixon receives most of the Republican votes since there is no opposition and no other candidate running.....

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Wednesday, April 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Heavy clouds but no rain as yet, 80 degrees this afternoon and wonderfully humid.

I found my 9 o'clock hostess discontented this morning. She finds her husband does too much traveling. She is right, of course. He went to New Iberia for a luncheon today. She will go to New Iberia tomorrow. He will go to New Orleans tomorrow, remain over night and return via Baton Rouge Friday. She will return from New Iberia Saturday evening. "If only he wouldn't always be in the big road....."

So far as the Ray Charles concert at the college last night, my various reports surprised me. A hillbilly student who like his papa is a racial bigot, volunteered that the whole performance both as for Ray Charles in solo and Ray Charles with his 4 or 5 associates Carmen Breazeale who always plays at "Lady Bountiful" where color is concerned and who never misses a trick at college doings, stated flatly that she had not heard a word about any musical being scheduled for last night. Mrs. Walker reported a wonderful evening. It will be interesting to see what, if anything, Thursday's local paper has to say about it.

Wisteria and magnolia fuscata always bloom at the same time in the local gardens. I have been noticing the wisteria of late but it was only today that I go around to look in the direction of the fuscata trees where I found that their blossoms were right on schedule. I shall pluck one in the morning and enclose it with this memo although I suppose the fragrance may well have evaporated by the time the envelope reaches your truehand. The aroma vaguely suggests banana oil and isn't to be compared with the wisteria although the combination of the two is often pleasant enough.

I. S. Willard 'phoned this afternoon. She wanted to report that much of her German iris is in flower at Petit Tarn and that she wanted to take some color pictures of the over-all display. She wanted advise about attempting the pictures on a cloudy day or if she would do better to wait for a brilliant sunshiny day. I told her I knew nothing about photography, especially color photography, but that it was my understanding that too brilliant a sunshine, especially on flowers, sometimes produced something in the nature of reflections and that a summer sky, faintly draped with gauze clouds was generally considered the ideal lighting for such photographic work.



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Thanks to the efforts of Southern Bell yesterday, the 'phone has added another hive of bees to the receiver so that yesterday's reception of words presented admissions of only about every 6th or 7th word, tonight's reception has been so boiled down as to eliminate about every 3rd word. As you may be sure, one should achieve a status of complete isolation soon if Southern Bell has anything to do about it.

There was a mild "to-do" this morning when somebody noticed the tall white pillar at the back of the big house, the one on the corner supporting the roof, going straight up from the ground, --the one to the extreme right as one views the back of the big house as from the African House, was sagging. It was taken down and was pronounced rotten. There was nothing about the pillar as viewed casually that gave any hint that the inside had deteriorated, so well did the white paint give the impression of solidity. A half a dozen people were called in to see how best the pillar could be replaced by a new one. It seems that this one was a single piece of wood, made especially for the place it occupied as a support. For once I kept myself out of the discussion since there seemed to me an ample number of "experts" to attend to the matter. My personal opinion is that termites probably hollowed out the whole interior of the pillar but others may decide that point and it doesn't matter so far as that pillar is concerned since it is being replaced. Having given some attention to such problems from time to time, however, I am inclined to think my diagnosis is correct.

My chief concern at the moment is rounding up two shingles. Last January a high wind swept the sheet iron off the chimney top, knocking out two shingles just below, the shingles changing to be just above my bathroom. Every time it rains, the absence of the shingles permits the water to come into the house, seep through the wooden ceiling and so drip onto a big desk. Instead of wearing my favorite raincoat whenever there's a shower, I drape it over the desk and arrange the folds so the water will drip into receptacles put on the floor to receive it. I keep enquiring a racket about the matter intermittently from the merchant planter on down through the clerk, the overseers, the carpenters and field hands but still it rains and nobody seems any more able to stop that than to round up a couple of shingles. I'm glad the pillar is getting more favored treatment. And so things turn and so I must turn in. I listened to the Southeast Asian business tonight, comprehending less and less the more I listen.....

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Thursday, April 4th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and cool in the 60's. It rained two inches between 6 and 9 this morning which is another way of saying we have had 2 inches twice in 2 days. I awakened at 4:20 this morning when a puff of wind blew the curtains of the casement windows near the foot of the bed right straight out in a horizontal position, suggesting that Uncle Israel might be on a frolic.

There were half a dozen whimsical things that happened during the day, one of which struck me as odd enough. The telephone which was said by the representative of the company, to be in perfect order in the late afternoon was worse than ever by 6 p.m. and I got in touch with the office this morning, asking them to come again and try to do better. I reported that one of their wires was resting on the tin roof of a cabin down the road. It was thought that might account for some of the trouble but nobody showed up today either to check my 'phone or to remove the wire from the tin roof. Of course that is another way of saying connections are mighty poor again tonight. About 2 o'clock this afternoon I. S. Willard called. When she heard my voice she said she was so glad to hear from me because she wanted to run through a couple of papers with me whereupon both she and I heard a gentleman's voice asked about having dinner together tonight. It quite took I. S. Willard's breath away but she did say she would just love to. But then I threw her into utter confusion by saying that the voice that had put the question was not mine but some other person's. She asked me if there was someone talking with me. I said there was not anyone on this line but that wires had obviously become crossed and two separate conversations were going on for our confusion but apparently not for the others since the others apparently couldn't hear our voices. I could scarcely blame her for being mystified but was alarmed when she said she would like to return to the suggestion we sup together. I tried to explain what was up at the same time the other couple were continuing their conversation but I. S. W. was completely baffled and so I terminated the effort by shouting that I would call her back a little later and that I was not coming to town to sup.

Heavy fog, wind, and rain tonight. The telephone could do so many strange things as our local she can rig up.



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Just as I turned this page, three 'phone calls came through in succession. Carmen was one caller but in spite of much ear-bending, we couldn't get much of an exchange of news. I never could make out the identity of the other two who called.

It was only after this scuffling that I realized it was news time. It goes without saying I am shocked at the shooting to death of Dr. Martin Luther King, jr. Anyone who has received the Noble Peace Prize is a person whose name is known around the world and naturally the news media around the globe will be crackling with this latest outrage in racial matters while the deed, itself, is bound to set off more outbreaks of violence and thus the fires of discontent will rise, each outrage adding fuel to the flames. What a coincidence that it was this very day that the Senate killed President Johnson's recommended legislation on the control of firearms.

Mrs. Somebody at the Hatchiteches Parish Library called me this afternoon to give me some information about the translator, Scott-Moncrief. The connection was so poor, I am not sure I got the data correctly but it runs something like this:

Charles Kenneth Scott-Moncrief, 1889 - 1930. (1920?) Captain in the British Army. Famous for his translations from both Italian and French language into English. Scholars immediately praised his translation of Chanson de Roland from old French. Stendhal's contemporary French was notable and his rendition from French into English of all but the last volume of "A La Recherche du Temps Perdu" hailed as ultimate in the translator's field. His son issued a volume, "Thoughts and Letters" or some such title, printed by Chapman. I assume Chapman to be an English house.

I asked several times about the 1889 - 1920 dates for it seems extraordinary, even as in Mozart's musical world, that in the translation field, one man could have accomplished such magnificent translations in such a short time. "The world is so full of a number of things....."

15432

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Friday, April 5th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with a 20 mile north wind, thermometer in the 40 to 60 bracket.

I got the house turned upside down and back to rights before 8 o'clock this morning and so was able to do some gardening before the hairdresser arrived at 10. Before he had half shorn my locks, James appeared and remained until 3 o'clock.

He said Kay has bought the Perrault house at the reasonable figure of thirty eight thousand dollars and that she and Mrs. Crabtree are now busy seeing about installing furniture and the like. James said that when passing that way, --the Perrault house -- the other day, he had a pleasant half hour chat with Mr. Perrault who told him of his years of association with the William Randolph Hearst organization. He said he had spent some time in South America looking after Hearst interests in Chile and Peru and that he had spent years in New York in the Columbus Circle neighborhood in the Hearst administrative offices there. James said he mentioned having done some work in checking on packing boxes in one of the Manhattan Hearst warehouses of which it is said there were many. In the one warehouse he checked some twenty eight million dollars worth of treasures, still in their packing cases to this day, he believed. James said he understood it was in the 1920's that the Perrault house was built in Hatchiteches and appears to be constructed of excellent material and is sound as a dollar with every imaginable detail worked out with a nicety of touch that made the house quite desirable as a home and adequate to house Mrs. Crabtree and whatever entertaining Kay envisions carrying through. James said he thought the 1226 Williams Avenue house was equally ample in size and excellence of finish for entertaining, to but Dr. Phillips is living there and so it was just as well to have another house or two. I believe the newly purchased house is on South Williams Avenue, thus making a trio of habitations, each several blocks from the other but still on the same thoroughfare. All this may sound a little odd to you even as it does to me.



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As for the disturbances that have characterized the 24 hours following the death of Martin Luther King, it gives one reason to pause to consider so many things and to keep one's balance at a time when so much scuffling is in progress. I must say I am astonished at the doings in Washington for somehow I had never thought of the nation's Capitol as requiring a curfew. With that edict forbidding people to be on the streets after 5:30 tonight, I am wondering how many the effects will be on how many. If one cannot be out of doors after 5:30, I suppose all business houses such as restaurants, theatres and so on must be closed down and thus the ever-widening circles begin and extend. Having heard no news after 5 o'clock this morning until 7 o'clock tonight, I wasn't long in catching up on details of which there were quite a few but no account of catching up with the assassin of Dr. King who, I am sure, will turn out to be a fool as is always the case in such murders. I liked what Eric Saveri had to say regarding Dr. King:

"His was not a life's journey from light toward the dark but rather a journey through the dark toward light".

I am hoping you have had an opportunity to see this week's copy of Life with the front page carrying the death masque of Tut-ank-Amen and the article inside concerning Egyptian Art. I gather from one of the headlines that this is an initial chapter in a series of articles on the same subject. This one alone is sufficient to make the year's subscription worth while and I have no doubt the succeeding articles will prove of equal worth. In stopping to think about it, one is amazed, in a way, to think that running concurrently with this Egyptian phase of civilization, there were so many others flowering at the same time such as the Cretean, Greek, Mesopotamian, Chinese, pre-Inca and Heaven knows where all that they should have waned at all is wonderful. But to have waxed and waned and then waxed again and sometimes again and again is far too remarkable for the average brain to comprehend. Already I find myself impatient for the next issue of Life.....

15434

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Sunday, April 7th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Beautiful weather with the temperature on the cool side, --45 - 65.

The nicest thing about the two days has been the Thursday letter from Lyme in Saturday's post. I am so happy to learn all about last week's natal day and that the weather was so cooperative. I thought it so kind of little Miss Lee to share so many details of the day with me and I was especially delighted to learn about the candle snuffer which sounds so gay and so 18th century. I found it especially timely that the unexpected greeting came to hand from the Government with such a tidy sum. As was so pertinently expressed -- "not to be sneezed at".

The account of the day and especially all the remembrances and the good food pleased me no end. And I liked the "left over" asperge converted into soup which, having been contrived by the true hand of little Miss Lee, is bound to have been delectable. I just love asperge and especially when employed to make its delicate flavor contribute so mightily to a soup, -- a creamed soup, perhaps.

I rejoice to have news regarding the arrangements carried out by auntie. I should imagine the two girls might be of immeasurable help to each other in getting along and the more so since each has a primary object in hoping the pathway of their respective off-springs may be smooth in a way by the mutual concern of the respective relatives.

The package containing the reams of paper will no doubt be arriving early this week. It was so sweet of little Miss Lee to send such a fat bunny hoping in this direction. I make use of the stationary every day and, of course, it goes without saying that every time I reach for a new sheet, my thoughts instinctively fly in the direction of Lyme.

In making acknowledgement of the receipt of the portrait of the first Secretary of the Treasury, I am suggesting a compromise in the matter mentioned for its use. My thought on the subject follows this line of reasoning, -- to wit, that we send the disc along to auntie as a joint project with Lestan offering the disc and little Miss Lee taking care of all the details of packing, shipping and all that that entails. And so I am enclosing the portrait herewith and shall be putting the disc in the mail this week, hoping you find this arrangement quite fair and, if you think best, you might or might not, as you please, omit any reference as to the gift as coming from anyone but little Miss Lee.



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There were several requests for tours today, fortunately by 'phone rather than from the front gate and I replied negatively to all of them. What with the constant buzz, forever increasing and decreasing in intensity, I did not recognize any of the voices and none of the names. One call this morning was from a youth who said, when I seemed to fail in recognizing the name, that I had helped him with a thesis on Melrose recently. I have helped several youths and maidens in that particular line of endeavor and accordingly that phrase did little to throw light onto the identity of the speaker. Tonight at supper Celeste asked if that Roque boy whom I had helped with a thesis got me on the 'phone, the youth having called her for my number. I should have course made an exception in my position had I caught the name but at the same time I'm glad I didn't say "some one come all" since I had lots of things to do today and I was just as happy to have the Sabbath to myself.

And speaking of the 'phone, I had another gentleman from the Southern Bell or Tel and Tel whom passed this way and went to considerable trouble to take the instrument itself to pieces, the box that seems to be part and parcel of all 'phones but separated from it as an independent mystery box, and he even went down the road a removed the telephone wire from the metal roof of August's cabin and still the hive of bees remains buzzing in the receiver. This afternoon when picking up a fallen limb from a magnolia tree between my side gate and the big house, I noticed a telephone pole in that area, not standing straight but rather leaning over precariously at a 45 degree angle, supported from falling to the ground by the wires attached to it. I shall worry the 'phone company tomorrow morning bright and early, reporting the sagging pole. No doubt the recent difficulties must stem from this quarter and it does seem odd that in view of the number of employees of the company having checked and rechecked the faltering service, none of them ever noticed the collapsing pole.

The omelette on natal day was so good I thought I would try another on Saturday evening. And so I rounded up some especially nice looking herbs and had just cut them up fine as an ingredient for the Spanish part of the omelette when several people from New Orleans, en route home from a tourist conference in Shreveport, stopped off for a little tawing on their own hook. One lady explained she had been here once before with Elouise Thaxton within the last year and had told everyone of the delights experienced. When I finally got rid of them, I turned to the omelette and it was pretty good but not quite up of the birthday one.....

15436

Monday, April 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Rain unceasing, temperature stationary, --in the 60's.

And use of the word, stationary, brings us around to this morning's post wherein I found a sweet package of stationary which had made the journey from Lyme in perfect condition, providing me at the same time with my favorite of all correspondence paper and bless little Miss Lee's heart.

In the same post came little Miss Lee's Friday letter which I really had not expected, coming so soon on the heels of the one in Saturday's post.

I found everything in the letter so beautifully expressed and so neatly fitting into my own feelings touched upon in the letter. On the radio I had heard about the President and his daughter attending the Cook coronation but the broadcast I chanced upon did not mention any other names except the all inclusive phrase --"other distinguished participants in the services". I am of course delighted to learn that the widow of the Johnson redress was among those covered by that blanketeting statement. Nobody could better express my own hopes than did little Miss Lee about the welfare of the nation. Frankly, it seems to me fundamentally sound and, oddly enough the tragedy at Memphis and the ensuing disorders and fires in so many cities seem to confirm the impression I have that the martyrdom seems to have been a felt that nothing else had been able to do in forcing many different racial strains in the country's citizenry from their reserved and anti-racial positions into a situation in which both sides recognized the necessity of breaking down those color prejudices and joining the one side with the other in a common effort to attempt working things out harmoniously instead of standing pat and refusing to recognize the existence of the other. When the 1st Baptist Church in Natchitoches invited the preachers of all the other Baptist Churches in the Parish to join together in a services on Sunday afternoon, all under one roof, I redized that so far as the white Baptists of Natchitoches parish are concerned this was really a remarkable step in the right direction. As for the fires and disorders all around, the fact that the TV progr



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carried these events pretty thoroughly, it has impressed me how many negroes have expressed themselves as shocked at the looting by members of their race and how opposed they are to the black eye it gives everybody. To cap the climax in the Pelican State, the Ku Klux Klan set fire to a Baton Rouge lumber yard last night and thus found themselves clapped into jail along with hoodlums of the other race.

And now for a jump into the water. It began raining here about 5:30 this morning and by noon had dumped 8 inches around and about. In Wards 9, - Melrose, - and Ward 10, -- Cloutierville - from 8 to 12 inches have fallen since this morning. The prediction is for "widely scattered showers" tonight and tomorrow. Many roads, --main highways, --are closed, such as No. 7, from Alexandria to Shreveport on the East bank of Red River and for 20 miles on Highway 1, --Alexandria, Montrose, Natchitoches, Shreveport, about 20 miles of it in Natchitoches Parish has its cement under water cars were still attempting to negotiate at 5 o'clock this evening.

Red River is rising and that backs up Little River whose waters are over their banks and all afternoon cattle from that area were being driven to the high ground of the Montrose Hills.

Naturally the Ghana vegetable has been 4 or 5 inches under water since this morning. Naturally, the missing 2 shingles on the roof above the Yucca bathroom made way for much water to drip through the bathroom ceiling to keep the furniture and floor wonderfully damp.

Adding today's amount of rain, say from 8 to 12 inches, the 2 inches of last Tuesday and the 2 inches of Thursday, one really has quite an imposing total. I had to laugh tonight when the Natchitoches radio stated that the U. S. Army Engineers of Shreveport are going to send representatives to Grand Ecore tomorrow to observe the river at Taylor's Bend which lost a slice 25 feet in width today. We have lots of bird watchers in this Parish and if watching is all the engineers propose doing, I should think they would be well advised to remain comfortably in Shreveport and leave it to the bird watchers to turn their gaze momentarily on the river. Smile.

A couple of days ago I heard one single reference on a single new work that the United States had turned back to Japan the islands, --perhaps the Bonin or some such. I should have thought this gesture might well have had tremendous publicity, especially to cover the Orient, as an shining example of Western intention to return Oriental real estate to its former owners.....

15438

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Tuesday, April 9th, 1968.

Memorandum:

The temperature continues in the 60's and last night and until 3 o'clock this afternoon the sprinkling continued. I didn't even bother to consult the rain gauge since there was ample evidence all about that we had plenty of moisture. It will be time enough to look into that matter on the morrow, hoping the mean time the measuring device doesn't run over again. The prediction is for "widely scattered showers tonight and tomorrow" and I hope the prognosticators are wrong.

One can get to town readily enough by the river road rather than by Highway 1 but for some reason the postman did not appear today and so the clerk skipped up to Bayou Natchez and brought back the incoming mail. I don't know if he took the outgoing mail with him to get it started from Natchez but I assume he may have done so.

Carmen called me late this afternoon from her office. She was keeping the Red Cross office open beyond its usual closing hour inasmuch as Red Cross units from various parts of the State were bringing in various types of equipment, --boats for the rescue of people isolated in rural homes surrounded by water, canteen kitchens, cots, blankets and so on. Refugees from various rural sections of the Parish are being housed and fed by Red Cross workers at two or three designated places in town, the armory and so on.

The slushy situation under foot makes it a grand time to pull up plants that are the more thoroughly eradicated if the roots are pulled up with the stems, --elder berry bushes and fast growing things of that type.

By dint of considerable ditching or the keeping of ditches open, most of the water was drained from the Ghana garden and it appears that some of the rows of tomatoes, peppers, beans and such like may have survived the prolonged immersion but that scarcely seems possible. I'll know more about that after the skies clear and the sun perks them up or knocks them out completely.

Red River clawed off most of the remaining land between it and Cane River near Taylor's bend, leaving only about seven feet of soil, it is said, between the two rivers. I suppose the U. S. Army Engineers have a watcher there to observe doing fascinating but not too reassuring.



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I listened to the afternoon funeral services in Atlanta for Martin Luther King. I had not realized there had been morning services, too, and, of course, don't know if the morning ones were broadcast. My clearest reception of radio programs during they come in on CBS network stations but I couldn't find a CBS station in this area devoted to the subject. The NBC affiliate in Alexandria, however, gave the entire proceedings and I followed them with great interest. Like so many services of this kind, they were too long in many respects. What I mean is that in view of the vast number of crowds present, scores passing out with exhaustion, it would have been better at least to cut the hymns to a single verse and the same melody for the other musical numbers, the songs of the choirs, the solo of Milla Jackson and so on. Some of the speakers, the clergy, is, might have given greater thought to brevity, too.

As for the Eulogy given by the President Emeritus of Morehouse College, I thought it was excellent even though I had to miss gaps when interruptions barged in a couple of times. I am hoping to discover a re-broadcast of the eulogy tonight for I should like to hear the whole thing straight through and I should also like to hear again the names of some of the people whose careers the speaker mentioned as being noteworthy. The reception wasn't very clear but even had it been, I suppose I should not have recognized the names of several heroes mentioned although, I must confess I did find myself familiar with the name of Jean of Arc but not all the others.

That so many politicians should have been surprised at the present was not surprising but I must say I had not expected so many Governors and Senators, now running for office, should have been there. That the Mayor of Atlanta was present was good news and nobody, naturally, was surprised that the Governor of Georgia was not. I was glad to hear that Mayor Lindsey and Ralph Bunche were in attendance, for I hadn't heard of the New York Mayor since the scuffle with Rockefeller a while back and I hadn't heard the name of Ralph Bunche in I know not when. I find myself wondering what he is up to at the present time, --possibly still with the State Department.

It seems to have been a grand funeral all around and I hold the thought, as has been the case before in History, that the death of a great man accomplished much in helping humanity toward a better day.....

15440

15440

Wednesday, April 10th, 1968.

Memorandum:

The thermometer remains in the 50 to 70 area but the skies have changed from cloudy to fair and tonight's moon, like this afternoon's sun, is wonderful.

All the talk continues about the recent rains. The waters falling on the Montrose hills are running northward to spill into old river at cypress and then turn abruptly south. This makes a lake of all the lands in the river bottoms from Bayou Hachez down through cypress, Montrose, Derry and so on and Highway 1, cutting through that area, is under water and therefore closed. I do not know if the Texas and Pacific trains paralleling the highway are under water or not. How the mails from here come in and go out, I know not but assume they do. I have put off sending the disc for auntie until later in the week since I can well imagine all mail and especially parcel post may get jammed up somewhere along the line as between here and Hatchiteches and where ever the outlet may be from there.

There are low-flying planes and other air-borne vehicles droning over this area during the daylight hours, surveying the vast expanse of water in this area. There is a vast lake between the Melrose bridge and Montrose which nobody can negotiate in a car. I suppose when one reaches Montrose itself, one reaches merely an island if, indeed, one reaches Montrose.

There is much chattering on the radio about the local situation and much of the information is untrust-worthy. For example, this morning over the Hatchiteches station which certainly ought to know better, it was stated that "Black Lake in the southern part of the parish", is at flood stage. For the information of the Hatchiteches radio, Black Lake is not in the southern part of the parish but just as far in the northern section of the parish that it can be. Fortunately the road running from Melrose to Hatchiteches along the east bank of Cane River is still open and as the water generally is beginning to subside, that way, --the only way, will undoubtedly remain open. It is interesting that if anyone from here should want to get to Alexandria, 45 miles south of Melrose, he would have to go northward for 15 miles to Hatchiteches, then several miles more to Grand Ecere and thence eastward to Clarence and then southward by Highway 71 to Alexandria, a distance, I suppose of 75 or 100 miles there, on the town only 40 miles from here under normal traveling conditions.



15441

Another report from the Hatochitees radio which is constantly being aired and which never fails to make me smile is the account of the boats, described as "amphibious ducks" which are operating in this area, brought in by Red Cross. I don't quite know what is meant by a "amphibious duck" but I should be even more puzzled if anyone ever mentioned a non-amphibious duck. Frankly, I thought that was what made a duck a duck, --the fact that he was amphibious but I must be wrong or somebody is redundant.

The appearance of the sun suggested it would be a good time to start the power lawn mowers going for I must say the clover and all vegetation is growing at a great rate. As the pecan orchards continue under water and as it is time to spray the trees with some kind of stuff, several planes were called in this noon and began spraying liquid stuff from the skies while tractors with spraying devices on the ground were at the same time making a great racket doing the same from the ground. How much of the stuff landed on the budding pecan trees, I know not but I do know that my hands and face smarted from the dew the airplanes were putting out when passing not too far from the gardens where I was trying to do some work.

Naturally the presence of so much water makes a perfect excuse for the phone company to do nothing about the sagging telephone poles in this area. From the store this morning I contacted the manager of the company in this part of the State and did quite a song and dance about the situation but, of course, got nothing but water splashed in my face, figuratively speaking. There were a few in-coming phone calls during the day but on responding to the several rings, I could hear no voice, -- only the racket of frying fat or a hive of bees in the receiver. I can establish no connection through the dial, not even an operator and thus I am given a measure of relaxation from telephonic contacts.

I am dropping Pie Du Four a note tonight, congratulating him for his recent columns in the Times Picayune on subjects having to do with early Louisiana to harmonize with the current 250 anniversary of New Orleans. I thought the one about the role of the Germans in settling Louisiana quite interesting and I don't recall every having heard that the duo d'Orleans had had something to do about the earliest Germanic settlements or settlers. The other column about the face on the coin also quickened my interest, especially the reference to Charles the 3rd and his two successive wives, Marie Louise de Savoye and Elizabeth de Hongrie, so amazingly described by Maude Crutwell's "Princesse des Ursins".

(Savoye)

I shall be curious to learn how correspondence from this bend of the River is getting through.....

15442

Thursday, April 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

A beautiful day and night, cloudless and tonight's moon must be full. Last night's low was 51, today's high 81.

Everything ran along in surprises, none of which were of great moment. Sister appeared this noon at dinner and, I assume, is spending several days on ye olde plantation. At sunset this day, Clement, the carpenter and his assistant, K. D. Peace, appeared on the gallery, announcing they were all poised to put the missing shingles in place on the roof above the bathroom. Better late than never but mildly amusing since it turns out there were bundles of shingles in some store room or other all during the past season which certainly made the wait from January to April unnecessary for the avoid absence of materials.

And then, at long last, the screen door, out by Andy a year or so ago, was refurbished with a new screen.

The side gate between Yucca and the African House was also repaired so it would swing properly and I was glad to get that attended to but disappointed before supper to hear a great racket in that direction a little before supper where I discovered that an energetic guest had broken the gate so it is right back where it was.

My day was something of a merry-go-round, trying to get some things done and at the same time avoid getting entangled in things in which I had no hand such as digging a ditch near the big house where some men were searching for a broken gas pipe at the same time some other people were setting in a new column on the back gallery of the big house.

At some time along the way I wrapped up a package for little Miss Lee. It will go forward at the same time this memo does. I believe that when the wrapping is removed, it may be manageable enough. Because of the cardboard wrapping, I



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might mention there are three thin items in the package,--  
the disc for auntie, 2nd, a nicktie box containing  
two strips of slides to go with the disc, one slide being for auntie, the other for little  
Miss Lee. I doubt if these will be of much interest to  
anyone who does not fiddle with a projector but perhaps the  
naked eye can make out some of the pretty coloring in the scenes,  
all of which are familiar to little Miss Lee but perhaps not  
to auntie. I should think the strip for her might readily  
be attached to the jacket of the disc if little Miss Lee  
think the \$ strip would be worth sending along.

The third item is merely the Gillette glossy  
print of the bell ringer as mentioned in the column, Serenade  
for Spring. I chanced to obtain another copy of the  
Times carrying that column and attached the newspaper to the  
envelope containing the glossy print. I suppose  
I mentioned the matter of taking the picture sometime back  
but I did not put a date on the back of the print which,  
if it seems well to mark it down, might be March, 1968.  
This is the picture showing not only the bell but the big house  
in the background.

After supper I hoped to catch up on the news, none of which  
I had heard since last night but just as  
I turned on the radio, the gas man and an overseer  
arrived to check on the heaters in the house and to light  
the gas heater in the bathroom, what with the pilot light  
there having gone out because the gas had been shut off during  
the day when the system was being overhauled.

All 'phone lines in this area were out of commission today.  
Phone service was resumed at 5 o'clock tonight but nothing  
as yet has been done with the swaying poles in the garden and so  
the buzz in my receiver makes the instrument worthless.

There was no mail today although the postman made his  
rounds to pick up the outgoing sacks. The Hatchiteches Times  
should have come but did not. If it contains any pictures  
when it does arrive, I shall send the issue along.....

15444

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Good Friday, April 12th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair today with thin clouds dripping rain at  
sundown. I was hoping it might be clear tonight for the  
eclipse of the moon but the sprinkling continues although  
we really don't need any extra moisture and I have been  
out on the gallery a dozen time tonight to observe  
the phenomenon of a moon in double shadow, that from  
the earth and that from the clouds. It goes without saying  
that now, --10:30, --although the moon must be full, it  
is actually darker than Egypt. Within a couple of hours,  
I suppose, the earth's shadow will disappear and, because  
of the lunar fullness, the clouds will lighten even though  
the moon herself remains invisible.

I guess it was a week or two ago I wrote something in the  
column about an unacknowledged Christmas gift I had  
received from the Kirkwoods of San Antonio. Of  
course I did not use the Kirkwood name but something  
close enough to suggest it to the friends if they chanced to  
run across the column. Obviously they did not see the  
article but by sheer chance a letter did come from them today  
and, marvelous to relate, it actually bore their return  
address. If I can find it, I shall enclose it herewith for  
Imade it a point to drop everything and get off a letter to  
them forthwith. They are fine people, Bob being  
interested in everything while Althea is simply  
sweet-sweet.

Our visitor remains with us but thus far into  
the Easter weekend, --and Good Friday is a holiday in  
Louisiana, there have been no pilgrims. Perhaps  
the new media has covered the high water widely enough  
to impell pilgrims to avoid this Parish. I am  
glad to say that although Highway 1 between Lerry, Montrose and  
Bayou Hachez still has a few inches of water over  
the cement pavement, cars are able to negotiate that  
route. The vast lake between Melrose and Montrose  
remains and the road is impassable but it is said that



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the water is imperceptably draining away but I reckon it will be a week or two before the lakes formed by Tuesday's deluge will vanish, especially if tonight's sprinkle continues and the rains predicted for tomorrow come through.

James 'phoned from town this afternoon. He asked if I could use some tomato plants, peppers, eggplant and so on. I said I could. And so he appeared a little after 3, bearing dozens of sturdy young plants, not to mention a bucket of ice cream. He staid for a little visit and accordingly I did not get all of the things into the ground but I got several dozen of them in before dusk descended and the moisture began dropping from on high.

I enjoyed the chat very much, revealing as it did so many strange reports about something and another. For instance, Sudie has it all figured out and her friend accepts the prediction as gospel, that the Kremlin is all scheduled to take over the nation on April 22nd. This isn't the first time such definite dates have been set for the Communist sweep. I find it so odd that Sudie and the others aren't a little puzzled and, for all I know, a little disappointed when the fatal date arrives and they all wake up only to discover that they are still all intact and that the country hasn't gone to the dogs after all.

The Vice President addressed a Labor convention in Baton Rouge last night or the night before and spent the night as guest of Governor McKeithin. This was enough to start the radio stations speculating on the Governor as a running mate for Humphrey, should he be nominated for the Presidency. At the same time mention was made of Representative Boggs as a possible running mate. I could imagine Boggs as a possibility but McKeithin strikes me as of dubious value in a national picture. There seems to be so much in the pre-convention political doings that is quite beyond my comprehension. I even find myself wondering if at the last moment L. B. J might astonish everybody by pulling a rabbit out of a hat.....

15446

EASTER SUNDAY,

Sunday, April fourteenth, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy yesterday and today. The thermometer runs from the upper 60's by night to the upper eighties by day with a high humidity making it seem even warmer than it actually is.

I spelled out the word, fourteen, in the date line as I am not certain if this machine is writing in capital letters or not. The shift keys in the lower right and left corners, intended for producing capitals, don't seem to spring back into place, once they have been pushed down and therefore, after I have pulled them back up by hand, I am not sure if the keys they govern go back to the small letters or not. Perhaps by the time I have finished this memo, the keys will get back to normal operation. If not, I shall use the machine in the office to make the envelope.

I am holding the thought Easter was a happy day in Lime and that little Miss Lee enjoyed a measure of pleasure. I know she gave happiness to my neighbor across the fence with a lovely Easter greeting.

Thanks to the same little Miss Lee, Leston was able to celebrate his Easter by arranging his desk and thus properly house the favorite stationary that the Easter bunny had delivered a couple of days back. It is such a delightful sensation, handling the double Easter egg and having it so placed that it is right here readily to hand every evening when correspondence timerolls round.

First and second class mail was short on Holy Saturday but there was a parcel post package from Crockett. It contained an electric mixer, a bottle of home made salad dressing and what appears to be a fine sinamon cake but I haven't sampled the dressing, mixed up anything mixable and I haven't sampled the cake as yet. It seems to me one doesn't hear from Crockett by letter much of late. Perhaps there is illness in the family or whatever it was that caused the prolonged quiet from the quarter during the past year.



34421

15447

Saturday morning was in the nature of a merry-go-round, what with one thing and another, mostly occasioned by the presence of Shreveport. A little after 7 in the morning, what with sufficient clouds to cut the rays of the sun and with the knowledge that the afternoon would be busy for me and that August would not be here to lend me a hand, he and I began setting out young plants in the Ghana garden. No sooner did we get started that much hooping from the big house, his name sounding amidst the din, impelled him to respond. The lady with nothing to do, wanted him to make up her bed. Imagine.

By mid morning, she had gone down to Magnolia, returning with a truck, an overseer and 4 men, explaining that Magnolia had wanted some banana roots dug and asking where she might direct the digging be done. Itold her I would take care of that detail and did so. To everyone's surprise and delight at noon dinner, she announced she had decided to return home for Easter and great was the joy all around.

Kay had 'phoned earlier to ask if she and Mrs. Crabtree might come down at three o'clock. They might. I doubt if there was much food left in Natchitoches, once they had loaded up and headed down the road in this direction. It took a while to put away all the plunder but finally that was taken care of and we followed with a please hour of chitchat and that was that. They reported that they are removing much furniture from the local warehouse tomorrow and installing it in the recently acquired Perrault house. Mrs. Crabtree will occupy an apartment on the upper floor and general entertaining will be carried out on the main floor.

About three thirty this afternoon, Celeste called to say J. H. wanted to know if I would like to take a little ride up and down the road to observe the water. I would. We drove up to Bermuda, over to Highway 1 at Cypress, the water having gone off the highway at Montrose but still a vast lake, perhaps 3 miles wide and 15 miles long running between Melrose and Montrose. The water is above the tops of the fence posts on the Melrose-Montrose lane and so one can only guess at its depth. A mile or two of the tracks of the Texas and Pacific railroad are under water still but the water does seem to be going down. We drove on to Cloutierville and chatted with Mildred McCoy at the Kate Chopin museum and thence back home via sections of Little River whose road is now passable submerged slightly in places. So much for a quiet weekend and may it have been equally so in Lyme.....

34421

15448

Monday, April 15th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 60's.

My typewriter seems to be functioning better tonight. I haven't had anything done by way of oiling or re-pairing. Perhaps it was merely tired and hadn't really pulled itself up to resume its labors what with the Saturday night rest it had, inclining it to seek a longer leisure, having tasted the repose to no work at all from Saturday afternoon until Sunday morning, all of which just goes to show what one may expect from people and contraptions, once they skip the accustomed routine.

The pleasant weather triumphs over the watery surroundings and many were the people passing this way today and even yesterday. On Sunday noon when I went to dine across the fence where the lady is adamant about having food served " piping hot", we sat down to table and were served bountifully. Just as the steaming gravy of some kind of a chicken fricasee was poured over the steaming rice, people from Baton Rouge appeared and as they were acquaintances of the master and as they asked for a tour, the request was granted the couple and mine hostess joined her husband in assisting while I sat waiting for their return for half an hour or so. The dinner, when we finally got to it, was not what might not be called a sizzling success.

Today just before dinner from people from Midland, Texas, put in an appearance. The man was a brother of the late Napoleon Carter who once ran the local garage. With him was a silly wife and three or four youngsters. They wanted a tour and for the sake of the late Napoleon, they

were accorded one to the benefit of nobody.

This afternoon there were people from Wisconsin, intent on what they had to see and altogether charming, the lady hailing originally from Scotland. There were frequent interruptions but



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everything went along alright.

I began the day by being disagreeable to the great American Tel and Tel official in Hatchites. I called to inquire if something would be done about making my 'phone useable. The head of the service department said he would see if he could have it looked into today. I was nettled by his casualness and made so bold as to say I thought my patience of the past four weeks had become over-strained. There was so much going on around here all day, I never thought of the 'phone until supper time when I knew the office would be closed. Accordingly I am putting through a call to the manager tomorrow morning when I shall preface my remarks by saying I have written a column that varugely resembles one I tossed off a few years ago which tended to give the main office convulsions when it appeared in print, expressing the hope that the four weeks of futility may be brought to a happy conclusion before the day has run its course. I resent the necessity of putting pressure on anybody, especially the officials of a monopoly but I think the mention of a column will persuade them that four weeks of neglect does anything will inspire some effort that will make their two billion dollar a year profit less resented by subscribers to the concern that is forever preening its feathers about its public responsibility. In the mean time, the old telephone pole, rotted completely from its base, continues dangling on the wires between Yucca and across the fence, the only 'phone on the line that is effected being the Yucca one because it is the terminal outlet of this particular line.

Today's post brought several greeting cards which were intended for Holy Saturday but their messages will be just as welcome in the post Easter period as though they had arrived a couple of days ago. What with so many people in and out, carpenters borrowing stuff for the work they were doing around Yucca, -- tightening the sundial, making a new gate, putting a new top on the cisterns, etc., not to mention an effort to keep a slightly tipsy gardener from making ducks and drakes out of the newly planted garden, I never did get an opportunity to run through the mail other than to note the cancellation marks and conclude that everything might be held against another day's reading.

I hold the thought there is a touch of Spring in the Botanical Gardens and that little Miss Lee is finding an opportunity to observe the triumph of Primavera.....

12441

15450

TUE day, April 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Far from 60 to 80.

I thought the cover of today's Life was especially interesting, the portrait of Mrs. Martin Luther King, Junior. I turned through the pages very hurriedly and was glad to notice there are some more illustrations of Egyptian Art and I want to read the article as soon as possible. The pages carrying the text seem all too brief but I feel certain they will hold no end of interesting particulars.

The peacocks of late have been showing an inclination to walk the public road. I have explained to them that that is no place for birds of such fine plumage but they disdain paying any attention to free advice. Thinking they would relish some nice juicy bugs and some fresh green grass, I turned them out along about mid morning. Paying no attention to the toothsome morsels around and about, they all trapped right over to the mirror to see if their hats were on straight and continued that concentration until about 3 o'clock when they vanished. About 6 o'clock, the grapevine reported them as being on the far side of the highway down beyond the garage. By dint of some persuasion, they returned home and tonight are within the domain of the Unicorn House where they will remain for a while until the wonderlust has worn off a little.

Some man doing Louisiana personalities was up from New Orleans this afternoon. He had stopped at Parlange where he had been directed to Melrose and he thought an article about Miss Hunter would be timely. How he failed, I don't know but after his first of two visits during the afternoon, he arrived here hoping I could set him straight on how to manage the personality he had come to capture on film. She obviously did not want to be bothered and told him she wasn't going to paint any more. How often have I heard that old line. But I must say she did have a different lie in explaining why she was giving up painting. To wit, that her daughter, Jackie, -- she lied, -- is in the hospital.



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afflicted by cancer and therefore Miss Hunter was going to give up her art and attend to her offspring. I had chanced to see the offspring springing only this noon at the store and realized, of course that Miss Hunter was simply trying to rid herself of unwanted publicity. Of course she doesn't know the word or its meaning and could never if she lived to be a million, ever understand its relation to and importance in the success of her career but simply didn't want to be bothered by my old picture striker or book writer.

The New Orleans gentleman returned to a second attack about 5:30 and I chanced to see him about 6:30 when he returned to get some camera shots of the several buildings in the garden. He said she seemed a little more mellow on his second visit and that he got a few shots of her about which she did not protest too much.

I called the General Manager of the 'phone company this morning at 8:30 only to learn his office does not open until 9 and that he would not be in today. And so I waited until 9 and called the witness Office and received the assurance from that quarter that the whole matter would be disposed of today. Nobody from the 'phone company ever showed up. I shall call the office at 9 tomorrow morning and try wearing them down until they reach the point,-- a month over due, when they will restore the service just to be rid of my undying pestering.

I. S. Willard called today. She seemed quite delighted with general, so near as I could make out but I couldn't make out much. The reason for my failure was only half her fault,--her habit of employing so many "errrrrrrs" and "ohhhhhhs" and "shssssss", not to mention the inevitable sailing off on tangents. The bees buzzing in the 'phone was probably more than half to blame but I must say that given either the "errrrrrrs" alone or themselves or the unending buzzing or the bees in the instrument piled up a superb total of nothingness.

On Lowell Thomas' broadcast of news tonight, I learned of the death of Edna Ferber. I had not heard of her in years and I must confess I never read many of her books although, like everybody else, I was so familiar with the "Showboat" story as presented on the stage and the screen that I might have felt I had read the book a million times but probably would have missed the Jerome Kern music, should I attempt reading the novel itself again.

If memory serves, it was tonight that TV was to present the Portuguese Fishermen with the voice of A. Seabury, esquire, lending beauty to the whole business. I held the thought little Miss Lee has been able to enjoy that presentation, too.....

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Wednesday, April 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Thin cloud coverage, thermometer in the 80's and humidity high-high.

It was so grand finding a letter from Lyme in today's POST -- As you may have already noticed, this machine continues kicking up so that capital letters are likely to turn up in the most expected places whenever I FORGET TO FIDDLE with the shift key, once the capital letter has been used.

A secretary arrived this afternoon just as a telephone man was buzzing in and out and around so that frequent interruptions got in between sentences. I DID NOT COMPLAIN to either person, however, as I WANTED the services of both so much. What's more, after both gentlemen had departed, the secretary before the telephone man, I told myself I should have the pleasure of re-reading the letter from Lyme on the morrow and that will provide today's delight all over again in that bracket while it will be a relief just to know that the 'phone is functioning again and that I shall not have to be worrying if the repair service is putting in an appearance or not.

I am so glad to have the word pictures of doings in Lyme in the social, floral and feathered sections. What a pity that illness continues to torment the one whose good health and happiness is so much in the minds and hearts of these so close in spirit to such a friend. I AM so sorry, too, that the festivities had to be cancelled, not only because of everybody's DISAPPOINTMENT but most especially because of the condition which was the cause of the cancellation.

The clipping is just grand and I AM SO GLAD to have particulars about Dr. Wolf. I am so glad to have particulars about the evidences of the arrival of Primavera. The Account of the various flowers and the general layout of the displays in the gardens provided such a comprehensive picture that I found reading about it next best to actually having been present to view the opulent display of so many lovely things.

This morning I remembered the name of a Mrs. BRUSSARD who



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has something to do with the 'PHONE BUSINESS in this area and so, before annoying anyone else in the set-up, I called the 'Pone office and asked to be connected with her. When I started to present my long and tiresome story, she asked me to hold the wire for a minute until she consulted a file dealing with 7273. She said there was a notation from a lineman's REPORT, stating that a pole carrying the wire was too precariously pitched as to permit the mounting of said pole to reach the wire. Laughingly she said she never heard of anything quite so silly, that she was distressed I SHOULD have been put through so much inconvenience and promised me that normal service would be effected for my 'phone before another sun had set. And, marvelous to relate, as indicated above, she was as good as her word, repairmen arrived, the line reaching RUCCA through the gardens was condemned and new wires, heading off in the general direction of the artist's house were strung and lo! the month-old pain in the ear was eradicated. NATURALLY as soon as the proper service was restored, I CALLED MISS BRUSSARD and thanked her for the magic she had achieved in one day, solving a problem of an entire month that not even the Distr. of Manager had been able to get done. She in turn expressed her surprise that I HAD call to express my thanks, saying it was the first time such a thing had happened to her in all the years she had been with the company. She volunteered the opinion that she thought it outrageous such a prolonged thing could have been imposed on any subscriber and most explicitly asked me to call her immediately should there ever be any trouble whatsoever with my 'phone. I most certainly keep her recommendation in mind.

Pat told the clerk today to ask me if Saturday afternoon at 2 would be convenient to receive JUDGE J. J. Bayles of HATCHINCOCKS AND some very high and important Judge whose name and seat of Court the clerk did not remember. I like JULIAN BAYLES and I SHALL be glad to see him and his distinguished friend of the "big weelsack". And speaking of Pat, the clerk told me the other day, Friday, I guess, that Pat's Mother, Eigemia, was expected to come from Texas to spend the weekend with Pat and his family. I suppose there will be grapevine particulars about this later. A few years back, it was said Eigemia was an alcoholic and something of a problem. I hope she is back on a normal balance by this late date.

And now for some fresh strawberries drowned in Vanilla ice cream and a slice of pound cake and that will be it.....

15454

Thursday, April 18th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, humid and warm in the 80's.

The shift keys on this machine are sticking worse than yesterday. If flocks of capital letters suddenly appear, just blame it on the fact that the poor old machine is obviously suffering from Spring fever while my mind goes wandering occasionally when I forget to pull the shift keys back up into place.

My medical secretary appeared but his wife did not. The lady remained at her post at home where the recent rains gouged out a big hole partially under the house into which one of the corner foundation blocks sank and another further along began sagging. CONTRACTORS WERE IMMEDIATELY CALLED IN AND WERE BUSY TRYING TO GET the vast abyss filled in and the house properly jacked up to rights. It is believed that in former times a colored Baptist church stood on or near the spot the present home now occupies and it is surmised an ancient cistern, never properly filled in, may have given 'WAY, THANKS TO THE HEAVY RAINS.

But the family servant has offered quite a different explanation. Her name is ORANZAS AND SHE DECLARES THAT LONG AGO when it thunders real hard, a thunder hole results. One assumes that somewhere down the years, the words, thunder bolt and thunder hole must have somehow been created to substitute each other in the mind of Oranzas and thus a real good loud thunderclap presupposes energy enough to cause an opening in the earth and that must be just what happened in the present instance.

Tonight's radio mentions a telephone strike is in progress in 40 States. Apparently my connection got established just in time although I haven't HEARD IF



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The Pelican State is included in the 40 as being effected. Be that as it may, I have made the most of my line during the past 24 hours and I am delighted to report that it continues to function perfectly. If the strike should turn out to be a long one, so that the dial system eventually plays out, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that everyone in the local system will be in the same boat and that some people will have a shouting advantage over others as was my case in the past month when all lines were functioning perfectly except mine.

It was said by someone in the store today that the merchant-planter is going to operate the work-day agricultural pursuits this year on the same standard as last year, -- "Old Time" as opposed to Daylight Savings. It does make some confusion, especially when pilgrims know nothing about the different systems but since pilgrims never give much thought to any system when it comes to barging in, it will probably make comparatively little difference. I must say, however, that I do regret the tendency of road runners to invade the place later in the day when an extra hour on which they operate is accorded them.

The lady across the fence wasn't home this afternoon to receive some Marksuille ladies who dropped by on their way to pick up some canvases at the artist's atelier and so they spent some time visiting me instead. Fortunately I got rid of them before a secretary arrived, thereby enabling me to read again yesterday's letter from Lyme which, it goes without saying, gave me the same pleasure the first reading did yesterday. I am thinking especially about the Virginia ham as mentioned in the culinary section and I am found to congratulate the gastronomic artist in having achieved such a success. I am told baking such an item is really an accomplishment if it turns out as it should. Somebody around here recently consigned such a job to a caterer in town and after the item was delivered and time had arrived for serving, it turned out that the thing was not done and that particular resistance piece had to be pushed aside for a disappointing substitute.....

15456

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Friday, April 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the mid 60 - 80 range with a tempering breeze making things very comfortable.

The 'phone service, in spite of the current strike, continues in fine fettle the typewriter getting just a little more bothersome with my dull mind frequently forgetting to pull up the shift keys after making one capital but rather crashing through with a flock of them before I remember to haul things back into line.

I hear so much talk these days about various types of festivities going on up and down the State and everybody speculating on how all schedules can be carried through without anyone missing a frolic. In Shreveport there is something they call Holiday in Dixie, an annual Spring frolic of parades, floats, dances and whatnot.

In Marksuille or Man ura this weekend there is the annual "cochon du lait" and nobody within hundreds of miles, of course, must miss that Mrs. Chopin 'phoned me to ask for particulars since she and her son and the latter's girl friend didn't have anything special to do. I referred her to the lady across the fence who knows all about such matters and who, if memory serves, participated in the thing with the merchant-planter Mrs. Chopin did contact her and then called me back to say she thought it would be lots of fun. She said my neighbor reported that she and her husband had not decided if they would go this weekend or not. I have a feeling the wife would enjoy nothing better but how the merchant-planter feels about it, I wouldn't know.

Next week is the crawfish festival at Breur Bridge and, of course, nobody can really afford to miss that. It seems to me I heard Sister saying something about attending that frolic when here last week. I believe she has been present at previous ones and naturally welcomes the opportunity to get into the big road, excuse or no excuse.

I.S. Willard 'phoned today to say she is driving to Baton Rouge tomorrow to attend the Gridiron Dinner..... down there tomorrow night. I can't imagine why she felt it necessary to



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go to considerable length to explain to me why it is necessary that everyone go away from their usual surroundings and habitation by way of a change. Just so long as I don't have to, I am quite contented to let these run who will.

Mrs. Walker called last night to say that she had decided not to attend the Gridiron Dinner this year. She didn't say what had brought on that decision and, naturally, I didn't inquire. Perhaps it is because Margaret Dixon will not be there for the latter is said to be in Washington, D. C. at the moment. It is said that the Dixon family to Norway was just grand and that she cannot wait until she goes back again. It would be interesting to know what she may be cooking up in Washington this weekend but I have no doubt it is something important since only something in that category would prevent her from attending the Gridiron.

The clerk tells me that J. H. had a letter today from Sister reporting that her dog is in the hospital, badly banged up in the wake of an accident in the street when the hound was struck by a car. The seacocks were making such a noise a day or two ago, I couldn't imagine what was biting them but now, of course, I realize they must have received the news by their own special radio and were undoubtedly voicing relief that their own existence was lessened by the misadventures of at least one foe. I assume that if the dog does not survive, another will be acquired forthwith to replace him and I'm already feeling sorry for the successor and the nervous prostration into which he will be heading. The old phrase about "leading a dog's life" was never clearer than that of a canine pet in that household.

"Doreatha was happy this evening after having had a long talk with her son, Bill, who for weeks has been acting as undercover man in the Houston police force. He grew a long beard and consorted with a gang made up of one white gentleman, five colored gentlemen and one lady of color. They are all drug addicts and BILL FOUND IT DIFFICULT to make enough of that stuff to give authenticity to his membership. The specialized in robberies and break-ins and had operated successfully for quite a long time. FORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, they are all new behind bars, all except Bill who is coming home to rest in the country for a few days.

I held the thought this weekend may be a restful one in Lyme.....

15458

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Sunday, April 21st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Yesterday was cloudy, humid and 80, today the same except for an inch of rain at noon.

In line with the 2 o'clock appointment for Saturday, I posted myself near the front gate at five minutes before the hour, remaining there until five minutes after 3 when I returned to Yucca to call Judge Bayles residence to see if plans had been altered but they had not and so I returned to my post and only a quarter of an hour later plus a million more mosquitoes, three Judges thereupon putting in an appearance along with the wives of three Judges and possibly an extra wife since, as I contemplate the group in retrospect, there seems to have been an extra lady in the group. It all went off pleasantly enough and they were gone before 5 o'clock. I must inquire as to the names of the two New Orleans judges, since the wife of one of them mentioned that when a young man, her husband had been Lyle Saxon's secretary.

The World and his wife journeyed to Mansura today according to two sources of information coming my way thus far. On Saturday morning Celeste told me she thought J. H. wouldn't care about going but if he changed his mind, she would let me know and that if they didn't go, we would dine at noon as usual but if they decided to go, she would leave a sandwich in the front gallery for me. As I heard nothing from that quarter, I concluded they decided to remain at home and accordingly I struck out in the rain. On arriving on the gallery, however, I saw a sandwich and so concluded correctly they had gone. They retruned about 4 and we supped early. Celeste said the pork was no good but the fried chicken was fine and so they brought the latter home for supper and I must say it was fine.

Mrs. Chopin called tonight to say she, her son and the latter's girlfriend attended the Mansura soiree, found the pork wonderful, saw everybody in and out of Louisiana and enjoyed themselves thoroughly. The father-in-law of Mrs. Chopin's daughter,



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Mr. Finley, of New Orleans was one of those she had not expected to see. He and a friend had driven up from the Crescent City on Friday night in a trailer and thus had made quite a perk weekend of it. Mrs. Chopin mentioned having seen Celeste, several people from south Louisiana towns, several Hachiteches people and, while in Mansura, had gone to visit with BLANCHE Swann whom she had known of the Press ASSOCIATION BOARDS. It had poured in Alexandria on their way down but stopped before they reached Mansura and a grand time had been had by all.

One day this week I am hoping to get this machine off to the cleaners. The cleaners will substitute a machine for this one during its absence. I mention this probability so that you will be not be too surprised but no doubt greatly relieved when a memo arrives in another script and if I can manage the new typewriter at all, you will be saved from running into capital letters at least in unexpected places. On Friday night I knocked off a column, --Signal from Saigon, which ought to present a problem to the proof-reader since I am quite sure quite a few words and possibly whole phrases got into the act in big letters. I shall be curious to see if the final version in print makes any sense at all.

I have been noticing during the past few days the same difference growth of plants in the neighborhood of the automatic lamps that burn during the night. I suppose I remarked upon this last year, -- the canas that are planted within the radius of the lamps being about twice the height attained thus far this year as opposed to like plants in more shadowy sections of the gardens. OFF hand one can only speculate on this difference in growth and, naturally attribute it to the light although I can't see why the lamp of an electric bulb should produce any growth on the plants. There seem to be so many things one observes but fails to understand. I'm going to plant a few red okra seeds within a 24 hour light circles and see if they out-ump the remeter ones.....

15460

Monday, April 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Sprinkley around 70 until noon, followed by cloudiness until 3 when the sun came out. North Louisiana has a line of thunder storms moving northeastward with tornado warnings for that area but tonight the skies here are radiant with stars.

James appeared at 10:30 and remained until 3. He brought the boys some fancy cat food and a dozen stury looking tomato plants for the Ghana garden. The latter were in little paper cups and will never know they have been set out since I pierce the bottom of the cup with a pin and the roots readily find their way into the soil into which cup and all is placed.

The clerk had found a dozen eggplant and bell pepper plant seedling along with half a hundred young tomato plants and so the Ghana garden advances.

James and I reviewed the political scene at some length. ALTHOUGH HE DOESN'T care for Mr. Nixon, he seems to feel he is perhaps the most likely one to get the Republican nomination and James seems to feel Nixon might be more to his liking than any anyone likely to be selected as the Democratic standard bearer. He doesn't like the prospect of the current Vice President moving up into the Presidential chair. I wouldn't mind if he did move into that position. James thinks Bobby Kennedy has not won any laurels for himself in the TV appearances he has been making. James seems like warm about MR. Rockefeller while I CONTINUE TO FAVOR THE LATTER BUT DOUBT IF HE WILL GET THE NOMINATION.

In the midst of things it suddenly occurred to us that today, according to a report earlier in the month, --this 22nd was to be the COMMUNISTS were to take over but we agreed the day was still young and one wouldn't really know how things panned out until midnight strikes when we may all awaken to find ourselves surprised that we are still here and intact. We speculated a bit as to why, in the face of such a calamity, one should be investing in real estate in the same month the world was scheduled to come to an end but decided such considerations were far beyond our depth of comprehension.



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We also got a laugh out of a sentence a lady had spoken in something between surprise and disappointment. The doors at 406 have never been locked when the people dwelling there have been at home, --not until recently when Sudie has passed that way unannounced and pushed the door open without bothering to knock. The other day when she found the door did not open to her push, she knocked and when the master opened it, the visitor, Sudie, exclaimed:

"Oh, I didn't realize you were at home or I wouldn't have come."

It was Sudie, by the way, who supplied the pamphlet giving the warning that the Communists were taking over the country on this 22nd day of the month.

Like most vegetation this year, the strawberry season is behind time, too. I suppose some of the stores have been supplied from nurseries and truck gardens in the RIO Grande valley for the past 6 weeks while the crop around Hammond, La. has been drawn upon for a few weeks past. We have had some very nice ones from the Hammond area and now Natchitoches Parish is beginning to bring forth some very fine ones. It seems to me the commercial houses are using rather smaller baskets than formerly, --3 baskets for 89 cents. It seems to me the smaller varieties are likely to have more flavor and I find that the berries that have been allowed to stand over night with a dab of sugar seeping through the berries during the over night interlude taste best. I must say that the sweetened strawberries in the frozen food department are usually more flavorful than the fresh berries just plucked from the vine. I have a bowl of them, prepared yesterday, awaiting my attention when I get around to explore the icebox and I find I am already impatient to sample them with a dab of pound cake, all of which ought to make the 10 o'clock news the more palatable.

I am holding the thought the take-over of the 22nd may not occur before I have taken care of the berries. Smile.....

15462

Tuesday, April 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and surprisingly cool. The thermometer never did get out of the 60's all day and tonight it will sag into the 40's.

I learned something about the Army today that I didn't know before. Although I had never given any thought to the matter, had anyone asked me if a soldier, dismissed from service, had any chance of returning to the ranks, I should have said "But no". It turns out, however, that I should have been wrong for it seems that after a discharge, the soldier may receive a second chance, is given some kind of training, his case reviewed by a flock of experts, --psychologists, psychiatrists medical and human relation experts, with no end of inquiries made from parents, educational representatives about his school days, how he got on with his associates prior to induction into the armed forces, etc., etc., all of which are culled and mulled over while his military 2nd chance training is in progress and then, eventually, a decision is made about returning him to his service from which he has been discharged.

I learned about all this from the Red Cross, the several letters and forms being read to me by Carmen in pursuance of requests for information from some camp or other somewhere in the East regarding a soldier whose home had been Cloutierville.

I should never have supposed that the Army ever bothered to go through a rigamarole to give a dismissed soldier a second chance, once he had been turned out. It cannot be that the shortage of soldiers is so great that induction officials are having to scrape the bottom of the barrel for recruits and so, I take it, that it must be established policy to provide a soldier, fired from service, a second chance to have another go at military life.

The colored head of St. Mathews school 'phoned me this morning to ask if I would receive a Mrs. Graham who is connected with St Mathews in some way or other, who was anxious to get



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some material about Clementine Hunter. I mentioned 2 o'clock as being a likely hour and the lady appeared in company with another lady, both being white, leading me to conclude that colored schools must have introduced white staff members which is something new. Mrs. Graham, it turned out, is the wife of the nephew of Superintendent of Natchitoches Schools and I gathered she was..... interruption..... the Mrs. Graham took lots of notes and her companion, Mrs. Quinn asked many questions and in the end I came to the conclusion that Mrs. Graham was not getting the information for herself but for her husband who was writing a paper for graduate work on a subject about which his wife was providing the data.

The interruption was a 'phone call from Dr. Tom Wells. Some Historical convention is being held in town at the college on Saturday night. After stressing an invitation to me, he mentioned some mogul is flying in on Saturday afternoon from the University of Oklahoma, arriving in Shreveport at 3, driving to Natchitoches and hoping to have a Melrose tour at 5 and getting back to town by 6 which sounded crazy enough to me. And then, as Tom Wells explained, some Chinese gentleman is appearing in a symposium at the college on Sunday evening and would like to make a Melrose tour on Sunday afternoon. "Too much sugar for a dime" came back my prompt answer, thereby letting out the representative of the Celestial Empire".

Don Wersley's mother of San Francisco is visiting her son in Natchitoches while Dr. Wersley is making a little visit to her parents in Boston. Celeste invited Madame Wersley, mere, to accompany her on a round of the St. Denis Flower Show this afternoon. Instead of having the flower show in a single place such as the Lemcoe House, the Country Club or where ever as is customary, the show is put on in a series of homes, --a half a dozen, in fact, so that those attending the show do so by visiting first one home and then another throughout the afternoon. I have heard of progressive dinners in which the patrons go to one house for the first course, another house for the next course and so on until the dinner has been completed but this is the first time I HAVE HEARD OF A FLOWER SHOW CARRIED OUT ALONG SUCH LINES. It's novel, of course but I know not if it has any other factors to recommend it except that it keeps everybody on the jump.....

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Wednesday, April 24th, 1966.

Memorandum:

There was a shower during the night but the day dawned clear as a bell and remains so tonight. The sunshine brought the thermometer from 45 up to 72 but a cold breeze out of the North kept things a little on the chilly side.

Having got thus far, I stopped for an hour for a conversation with the Squire. His lady and her companion are spending a couple of days in Shreveport on a shopping binge. Neither of us had much news to exchange but we had fun running through crack-pot events as purveyed by the news media.

I told him out the progressive flower show and he came up with a splendid idea, applying the same idea to a pilgrimage tour, the tourists being invited to see one room in one plantation home, another room in the next home and so on until everybody had all the road running desired and ending up greatly satisfied with their exhaustion and having seen just as much and more than could possibly have been assimilated.

On the darker side, I related the mild shock I received at dinner today when conversation turned around to the Post Office. There were two or three gentlemen from L. S. U. present, --peacen experts stemming from hill billy country but seemingly civilized. The gentleman with whom I always breakfast is now the local Post Master and he mentioned the Government had supplied all such offices with pictures of the slayer of Martin Luther King, Jr., and he added that his son, a student at Northwestern, on learning about the likeness of the picture coming to hand, expressed the fervent wish that his papa might secure a likeness for him so he could have it for his room and proudly print above it the words "My Hero". It struck me as being symptomatic of the incipient confusion and disorder in which certain sections of Society finds itself today.

Returning to the progressive flower show,



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I was delighted to learn over the coffee cups this morning that everyone had had a lovely time yesterday and especially Madame Worsley, mere. Mine hostess brought up a point that I think pertinent to folk ways obtaining in town at present, especially but not exclusively in the younger set, young masters and mistresses, most of them getting started in raising a family of 2 or 3 or more children and so many of these young couples building themselves homes running in to outlays of one hundred thousand dollars or more although the majority of them having only a fraction of such sums. Somehow it seems to be the opposite of the generation preceding them in that the older generation tended to begin married life with modest homes, gradually accumulating money and eventually building themselves bigger and better homes as their fortunes increased. Today all that seems old fashioned and the newly weds start off with homes that are expensive to build and expensive to maintain, the properties to be paid for at some future time, but which nobody appears to be giving too much thought. I assume this is following the same pattern when installment buying came into vogue. Prior to that innovation, people who wanted a home or an icebox or an automobile, saved their money and bought when the capital was within reach. The installment idea, however, changed that folk way and encouraged people to buy first and pay later. An extension of this formula now seems to be operating in the matter of showy homes, both borrowers and lenders paying the Lord the roof went start leaking before the property is paid for. In short, different times, different ways.

I have been impressed by the report of some commission which has been aired during the current week, something about 14 million people, --did I say 14 million people in the United States going to bed hungry nightly. Six Parishes in Louisiana appear in the list. Off hand I guess food is available for the poor in these Parishes but it is possible the people don't know how to apply or, equally possible, they are too busy doing less remunerative things.....

15466

Thursday, April 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 50 to 70 range.

The nicest part of the day was the arrival of the mail from Lme. The cancellation date was blurred but I have no doubt it was posted along about Tuesday. Naturally I rejoice to learn that things are rocking along alright but I regret the pressures continue with such intensity. I urgently recommend that correspondence be allowed to slide along unwritten until things ease up a bit. Preservation of one's good health is the most important consideration during these busy times. Letters may be resumed a little later when a measure of leisure becomes available.

Until such a time rolls 'round to permit chatting by letter, let's allow whatever free seconds there may be to be employed in catching one's BREATH. In the mean time, it is good to know that in spite of recent deluges, the mails have continued to function and that even the parcel post functioned alright.

In yesterday's memo, I believe I ended with the frustrating report from some resort, --Department of Agriculture, I believe, declaring that fourteen million people in the country go to bed hungry nightly and that such was the case in six Parishes in Louisiana. Today a correction was made regarding Louisiana in which it was said that nobody framing the report had visited Louisiana and that the six Parishes named were merely conjectural since it was assumed that about 54, I believe, might be thought to have hungry people, based on some States having about that proportion. I'm afraid the people who filed that report ought to do some more homework and then re-issue something more factual.

This noon at dinner, the clerk reported that there were four men from Opelousas doing something about the local gin, two white men, two colored men. He said one of the white men, a Mr Jarrell, mentioned that



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he read Plantation Memo in the Opelousas World and would like to meet Lestan and see the "museum". The clerk asked if I wanted to bother with the man. I asked him to send in not the one man but all four if they cared to come. They all did and although none of them were very high on the cultural ladder, they were all interested and I enjoyed the contact. Mr. Jarrell told me he is a descendant of the Lemme family of Natchitoches. He seemed pleased to find someone who had heard of the Lemme family. The two colored men were drinking in everything they heard and saw and when we said GOODBYE, ONE OF THE COLORED GENTLEMEN said he would never forget this experience and would have so many things to tell his family "all Summer".

I had not had my dessert and coffee when I took on this Opelousas contingent but never did get back to it and another group, --somebody from Fort WORTH, appeared and so the afternoon ran along.

The college is staging a four nightly production of "Sound of Music" which began last night and will run through Saturday night. I shall be interested to learn how the thing comes off, made up, as is the show, by college students, directed by Dr. Edna West of the Dramatics Department, with music supplied by the college orchestra. Mrs. Chopin and her son went last night, Celeste and J. H. are attending tonight, the clerk and wife tomorrow night and Carmen Saturday night. I shall be interested to receive impressions from such varied patrons. I suppose most people have seen the movie and some of these mentioned above attended the stage presentation in New York, Dallas or some such places. Any play attempted by college kids must be quite an undertaking but I should imagine a full blown musical would represent quite an undertaking.

Talk goes on about the telephone strike and at 7 o'clock tonight over the radio out of ALEXANDRIA, something was said about the doings, especially in Alexandria and Natchitoches circuits but I didn't pay any attention. I recalled the reference to the strike, however, when I tried to use my 'phone at 9 o'clock and discovered it was dead. Well, to coin a phrase, "there's no great loss without some small gain". At least nobody on this party line will be disturbed for a while by in-coming calls while persons like Lestan has a perfect alibi when not putting through any.....

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15468

Friday, April 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and breezy with the thermometer running from the mid 60's to the mid 70's.

It was a wonderful day, thanks to the arrival in today's post of Wednesday's letter from Lyme.

In the reading of same, there was a piece of good luck in that a secretary who doesn't like to read but is anxious to be paid for doing so, undertook going through the mail shortly before a series of interruptions developed. Along the way when we managed to dispose of people and continue with the mail, I felt instinctively that he was covering ground faster than it would be possible, were he sticking to the text. Finally and rather sooner than seemed possible, he had finished and gone on his way. Half an hour later, another secretary appeared, one who shows up only every five or six days. We immediately undertook the letter from Lyme, ran through it with alacrity but without so much speed that I could fail to catch four large gaps which Secretary No. 1 had omitted. It certainly sounds ridiculous to be paying two secretaries to read the same letters but the firing of No. 1 would leave whole days between the putting in of an appearance of Secretary No. 2. Accordingly I ret in the services of both and thus secure some inkling from what No. 1 makes gestures about reading and then retain what really matters to run through again when No. 2 shows up.

I can't begin to say how much I appreciated everything little Miss Lee had to report. Thanks, too, for exciting my curiosity about what Perrault means to little Miss Lee at the moment. I am understandably impatient to be let in on the secret. As pointed out in the letter, the mix-up with both the typewriter and the poor 'phone service did call for a measure of patience but neither of these things matter so much in contrast to the Perrault matter which is consuming me with curiosity.



15469

15469

I am so glad the parcel post thing went through all right and that you liked the slides and the bell ringing business. If Auntie enjoys the disc, we shall all be the happier for her on her natal day.

I was quite astonished to learn there was a 'phone voice that registered like Leston's. I can readily imagine what a turn it must have given little Miss Lee. I find myself wondering is the connection with the organization of which that voice speaks is scheduled to last much longer. Somehow I got the impression one would be over the hump sometime in March but obviously I was in error.

I am so glad to learn the many things concerning the funeral services of Dr. King. I am glad you mentioned the portrait on the cover of Life and how it suggested Art objects from ancient Egypt. I thought it quite grand. I have no doubt the printed material concerning the funeral services will be arriving within a day or two.

As though Montrose and all its recent flooding had not been in the local consciousness enough of late, Montrose got into another act last night somewhere between 6 and 8 o'clock when somebody, -- 'phone company strikers, one assumes cut the telephone cable serving this entire area. Early this evening, service was restored. Carmen called to ask if I had been away as she had tried for the past 20 hours, sometimes getting no signal at all, sometimes getting busy signals. One would think that under such circumstances, a recording would be put along side other "earned" message the company plays, advising people trying to secure a number that service is temporarily interrupted.

I want to mention especially how generous I think little Miss Lee is in suggesting Leston skip attempting communications until the ailing machine has been taken away for repairs and another substituted during its absence. It took me long enough last night to knock off a column about shorthand, what with all the shifting and de-shifting of the keys. So far, so good, however, and I shall keep knocking away until repairs are accomplished.

I don't know what inconveniences the absence of telephone connections made for others but it didn't bother me. J. H. somehow got a message inviting him to a bachelor's outing on Black Lake tonight where Parish big wigs are throwing a party for Governor McKeithin.

THE 24th made the 26 such a happy day.....

15470

15470

Sunday, April 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, high humidity, thermometer in the 80's.

It was so nice finding an envelope in a familiar hand in Saturday's post. I am so glad to have the King clippings and the accompanying note. I am so glad to have news of a member of the BUNCH family although the tragedy covered in the reference is pitiful. I had supposed the Bunch family was domiciled in California and accordingly was surprised to learn of their habitation being in Riverdale. I find myself wondering if Ralph is still connected with United Nations.

I should have started off this memo by wishing little Miss Lee a happy Daylight Savings. Like everybody else, I set my clock ahead an hour when I folded up my bed last night. I had expected to listen to some major radio station when 2 a.m. arrived to see what, if anything, might be said about jumping an hour but the static was so intense, nothing could be heard but racket in this area. There were storms and tornado warning all evening until one could hear nothing but the electricity itself. Marshall and Jefferson, Texas were in the path of the successive storms and Shreveport got 2 and 2 tenths inches of rain in 60 minutes between 10:30 and 11:30 last night.

I have more or less forgotten how the Daylight Savings thing works here last year. We are going to follow the same program this year, the plantation going on Old Time, but supposedly meals will go on New Time. With both the merchant-planter and his wife being forever busy with appointments beyond the confines of the plantation, I know not how they will make the two different times dovetail. As for Leston, he will not exactly be utterly confused by the whole



07421

15471

doings but he was not last year and is not now quite certain as to how the program will pan out from day to day. I shall have to keep in mind whatever appointments are made to make sure I don't land them in the middle of dinner or supper. The thing I like least about the system is the fact that road-runners are going to do what they did last year, which is to say, make the most of the extra long evenings, crashing in for visitations as between the supper hour and dusk-dark, too often finding Leston already divested of work-a-dayriment and collapsing during the news casts to catch his breath between supper and desk work.

THERE WERE GENTLEMEN FROM Station W. D. SU. visiting the gardens Saturday afternoon. The store thought the gentlemen would find me but they didn't and that's all I DO KNOW ABOUT THAT.

The gentleman from Oklahoma was scheduled to arrive at 5 Saturday afternoon. Invited for half an hour, the mosquito population giving me quite a going over. I RETURNED to Yucca, called the Wells h. and was told the gentleman from Oklahoma ought to be here any moment. he finally appeared he had four other gentlemen and 2 or 3 ladies. Tom Wells sent along a bottle as a thank you gesture. I felt like busting it over the head of the guy presenting it. Of course it was dark before they left here which certainly must have thrown out of whack the reception in Hatchitoches which had been prepared for them or him or what. I am certainly glad I put my foot down the other day when Tom tried hooking up a Chinaman for Sunday. I don't suppose I should expect people like the Tom Wellises to comprehend the inconveniences their helter-skelter pilgrims can cause. I AM DETERMINED to say no more frequently during the ensuing summer.

In regard to the agency expected to pick up this machine last week, I learned on Saturday, somebody had forgotten to transmit the message. May the memory prove better this week.

I'm still finding that word, Perrault, running around my brain and trying to figure out what it can be. Last night I dreamed a very pleasant Perrault story in the manner of CINDERELLA WHICH, I suppose may have sprung from all the thinking that has been going on of late about Perrault.....

07421

15472

Monday, April 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

A half inch of rain came down around midnight and the thermometer dropped. Under partly cloudy skies today it never got above 70. There are billions of stars tonight and tomorrow will be fair and warmer.

It was such a pleasant surprise to find a letter from Lyme in today's post. I am delighted to have both the letter and the clippings about outrageous doings in Morningside Heights. The buildings in that area are so familiar that all of them seemed close to hand as I ran through the particulars in print. I know Natalie will be finding the accounts interesting, too. I tried several times during the past couple of hours to reach her but couldn't get any response out of 352 - 4164. I shall try again later.

As between this paragraph and the above, I. S. Willard 'phoned. She was unusually good in a way. For instance, she mentioned having come to the college on Saturday night to attend the musical thing being presented there. I asked her if there was a good sized audience.

"Oh, yes," she assured me. "As a matter of fact, errrrrrr ahhhhhhhhhh, ummmmmmmmm, I could scarcely find a place to park."

I thought of hips but she probably meant cars.

She mentioned, as have several others, what a fine voice Sister Philomene has and this brings up something that is distinctly a new wrinkle in Catholic doings, it seems to me. I think I have already mentioned that the college was putting on "Sound of Music" or whatever the title is of that popular play. Now it seems that among the characters in the play are two or three nuns which is understandable enough but what strikes me as unheard of is the fact that several real nuns from the Hatchitoches S. Mary's Academy actually played the parts of the stage nuns, no less. It seems that Sister Philomene confided to several people, after the show, which



15473

15473

Run for four nights, that she has always had a secret desire to sing in public and Fate or more precisely, perhaps, the Blessed Virgin rigged things up so that La Belle Philomene really had an opportunity to do just that.

It goes without saying that I am delighted that such an unexpected performance came to pass and I am equally delighted that several of Sister Philomen's relatives who are residents of the Pelican State were able to journey to Hatchiteches to attend one or more of the presentations.

From all that has been going on since John, the 23, took over the Pontificate, one has been heartened to see how many innovations have resulted but the last thing I should ever have expected would be a full fledged nun in good standing taking part in amateur theatricals.

Returning to the scuffling on 116th Street and thenumber of patrolmenmaking their exit from the subway at 125th Street reminds me of two police station houses in the Morningside area in the old days, one on 125th Street not far from a Post Office branch office where often I had to go concerning a Parcel Post claim so that I grew accustomed to the green lights gracing the police station there. The other was on Amsterdam Avenueon the west side of the street about 112th Street or some such. I hadn't thought of either landmark until today's letter came to hand.

I received a 'phone call from somebody connected with the Hatchiteches administration today. A new sub-division is being opened up somewhere near town and it was thought it might be pleasant to name the streets after Cane River plantations and I was asked if I could give them the names of a few. I could. Even went further, suggesting that in the case of Oakland and Oaklawn, they give the latter its ante bellum name of Cashmere in order to avoid confusion. It seems the people plotting the development knew only the names of the owners of the plantations but not the names of the places and they seemed astonished to learn there were so many place names to be available.

On the domestic side, Daylight Savings got off at an unsatisfactory start with breakfast on old time, dinner on new time and no supper at all, what with the cook having mis-calculated altogether. Intended saying above that I. S. W. got tangled up with her religious duties yesterday, having set her clock back one hour instead of ahead.....

15474

15474

Tuesday, April 30th, 1968.

Memorandum: As you may have already noticed, I am using another machine. The man came from Alexandria this afternoon, picking up mine and leaving me his. I have no idea if I am hitting the keys properly but hope I am. The keyboard is not exactly like mine's but I am holding the thought that I am proceeding properly. I have been laughing in my beard ever since I began this memo, the first thing I have attempted today.

The reason for my merriment is due to the fact that every time I have hit a capital letter on this machine, I have instinctively grabbed at the shift keys to pull them up since that was what I had to do for so long with the other typewriter. The day began with the appearance of August with whom I had planned to do some gardening. But before we could get started, a bellowing from the direction of the front garden suggested that Joe was in the offing. I did not see him but August did and was swept away to level ground for Joe's new house he is starting to build not far from his present home in Pecan Park.

About 10:30 a lady and some gentlemen arrived from out of no where. One gentleman was the head of the Louisiana Tourism thing and with him were his photographer and another gentlemen or two. The lady, all of whom were from Rochester, New York, somehow connected with New York State Tourism. They wanted lots of pictures, mostly of Yucca and the African House. There were interruptions demanding my attention and I know not what pictures were taken and which were not. I doubt if they ever got a glimpse of the Hunter murals on the upper floor of the African House.

It is my understanding that New York State Tourism is compiling a photographic file of all the historic sites of all the States and that eventually people may write to the New York Tourist Bureau or whatever it is called and the Bureau will supply the inquirer with pictures of the places in whatever State may be desired. I shall try to find out definite particulars on this matter and shall pass them along to see just how the thing does work when the project gets under way if, it isn't already functioning in this particular field.



15475

You may have already noticed the pages from last Sunday's Dixie Roto having to do with Thelma and John. I find both the article and the pictures quite nice.

James dropped in this afternoon bringing me some strawberry ice cream. I was waiting my attention later this evening.

According to pattern, it appears that Kay had been dumped over board by California miracle working doctor just as she did the Tampa one. The new wonder-worker is a Dr. Nichols in Atlanta, Texas. I suppose all of these so-called specialists throw out all the medicine and treatment recommended by the previous specialists and now the carrot juice treatment or diet has been thrown overboard by the new Dr. Nichols. I learned only today that one of the injections that the California specialist had recommended quite took the breath away from the lady doctor when she was requested to give the injection. She declined to give it at first and in the end would do so only after Kay had had her own lawyer draw up a notarized statement signed by Kay that the lady-doctor would not be held responsible for anything that happened as a result of making the injection of the medicine as ordered by the California physician or quack.

I find it wonderful that there are so many of these so-called specialist around the country and how not one will subscribe to the medicine or treatment that the other insists the patient needs.

The Natchitoches Parish Library called me today to ask about granting an interview to somebody about Talking Books. The interviewer would like to bring a photographer along so that pictures might be made while the interview was going on, shots, I suppose, that would be fixed for the most part on the person being interviewed and the Talking Book machine. The article and illustrations were to be used, as I understand it, in connection with publicity about Talking Books. I think Thursday was the day agreed upon but I can't recall if it might have been for this coming Thursday or a week hence and either time will all right for me although I am not in a position to know about the publicity set-up and so the party of the other part will have to worry about that detail.

The big old grandiflora magnolia by the side gate is in flower and three of their blossoms in the tall white vase look perfectly stunning here on my desk and the perfum is marvelous.....

Memorandum:

Fair from 50 to 80, the 50 part being a little chilly for vegetation to advance much but the 80 just right so long as it persists.

I called Clara Genung this morning, not through any particular desire to talk with her but simply out of courtesy after quite a long season of quiet on my part because of one thing or another, none of which formed a real excuse for avoiding a prolonged account of the virtues of her Pekinese. And, as a reward for my good intention, I received one statement that more than compensated my effort. After doing quite a bit about her dog, she went on to tell me about a wonderful TV program she had recently seen, dealing with various types of migrations, --deer, birds, butterflies and seals. She said the film was so delightful and educational and she said she was surprised at the size of some of the seals, "some of them weighing as much as six tons".

I must say that I, too, was surprised to learn there were such things as six ton seals. What a heap of girl friends a sealer could make happy, stumbling over the makings of coats from the skin of such a single gob of an avoirdupois.

I must make it a point to brush up again soon on the marvels of nature by giving Clara a buzz again soon.

About 11 o'clock last night I had a long distance call from Wichita, Kansas. It was from Mrs. Charles Wood who apparently had nothing in particular to say other than to chat a bit about things in general, family, politics and her plans for the summer which include a trip with several in-laws to Yellowstone. Fortunately for her pocketbook, after the first half hour, the connection was interrupted and as we see that there some compensation in faulty telephone service undoubtedly to be placed at the door of the current strike.

The Library called this morning to say there had been some misunderstanding about the days which the people coming for the interview. I would be nice if I could get their needs together and bring forth a couple of six for wax seals.



15477

15477

Wednesday, May 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum

Thursday, May 2nd, 1968. Fair around the clock with the thermometer sliding from 55 to 85 and back again. I was to my desk.

And so, as I discovered when going to the Post Office, this is the beginning of birthday week, and bless your heart. You will be glad to know that the packages traveled in perfect shape, thanks to their perfect packing.

I opened the square thin one first, enchanted with the lovely wrappings and doubly enchanted to find the nature of the disc within. What with yesterday's moving about of the reading machine, the plug requires a bit of fixing before I can get an electrical connection again which I hope to effect on the morrow or Saturday at the latest. In the mean time, the likeness of the Pavillon de l'Aurore sits here on my desk beside holding the promise of a perfect progression from Marly-le-Roi to Sceaux. I don't mind confessing I am impatient to start it spinning, knowing full well that the musicale of the 18th century is going to enchant me just as much as did the 17th. I ran through the text of or on the reverse side of the folio and find it as entrancing as that on the Marly-le-Roi item. How nice it's going to be to consider the impending weekend and the presence through the magic of the disc of little Miss Lee as sponsor and all the distinguished names associated with Sceaux and beyond the dates of Colbert and his predecessors, along with his successors such as the duc and duchesse du Maine, the duc de Penthièvre, Princess de Baille and all. What a jolly weekend this is going to be, thanks to little Miss Lee.

And then I dipped into the thicker package which had traveled equally well. At first, by some magic, my hand touched the little round box containing the typewriter ribbon, such a treasure to have conveniently to hand when the present one and the one that accompanies the reconstructed machine needs replacement. And after that I came up with the cold medicine, every word of which I read on the label and concluded that this is just exactly the

15478

15478

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15477

15479

Thursday, May 3rd, 1968.

life saver that I am going to find comfort in having conveniently to hand in place of the Contact and which gave me such a wallop in the Spring that I shall forever shy away from same in the future, what with the present magic forever within easy reach in the top drawer of my desk.

Then came forth, as though sensing the fitness of things, right after the cold medicine, the two types of mouchoirs, much too exquisite for use when one has a cold but just the perfect coutrement when one, as one does on rare occasions, steps out. I find them quite the loveliness in texture and coloring that I have owned in many a decade and I shall treasure them always just for special occasions and most especially when I sense that the Lady of the Lamp shall be accompanying me in spirit through such beautiful talismen.

Then came the savon with the special wrist band to keep the deliciously scented soap from flying right out of the tub and beyond happens to me on occasions. I had seen a picture of a similar idea in some magazine a while back but with this difference that in the illustration, instead of having a wrist band, the soap had miles of string, designed to go over one's head to hang about the neck. I didn't think much about it at the time I saw this advertisement but today I thought how much more satisfactory is the wrist cord which enables one to operate so much more easily without having to stand on one's head to reach the entire length and of the torso. I enjoyed just sitting and holding the soap in my hand, the band around my wrist and dreamily gazing and the lovely birthday card that rounded out so nicely the happy feeling coursing through my entire being.

And then came the superb flacon by Fragonard, with the lovely essence exuding from the box even before I opened the wrapping. I couldn't resist fiddling with the push-stopped and automatically I winced with surprise and delight when the spray hit me right in the face which I must have just loved. I have the inner box and the flacon on my night table, intending to make use of it just before bed folding time but right now the outer protective cardboard box rests along side my typewriter and the aroma from that is so heavenly it provides me with the happy sensation of being in the presence at once of both the donor and the 18th century, all bundled up together in the perfect seal for this ushering in of natal day week. Again my thanks, and my sincerest wish that that simple expression may convey some little suggestion as to a measure of joy that is mine

15481

15480

Friday, May 3rd, 1968.

#### Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy with the thermometer ranging pleasantly from 60 to 80.

Humidity was high today and there were too many people between transplanting jobs in the Ghana garden so that with the coming of night, nothing afforded so much delight as a splash through a bath and a swish of Fragonard, making one feel like a new man and ready for taking wings for the sheer joy of feeling so fit at the coming of night.

Yesterday noon in the midst of soup, I nearly dropped my spoon in surprise when Sister suddenly blew in. One would seemingly develop some resistance to surprises from that quarter but somehow I, for one, never do.

She said she was leaving for south Louisiana and the weekend crawfish festival at Breaux Bridge, --immediately on finishing her dinner but asked me in the same breath if I would call her at 5 o'clock on the morrow because she would probably not leave here until Friday morning. An hour later I learned she had already departed, threatening to return on Sunday for a "little visit. But that was yesterday and Sunday will roll 'round when it gets here.

The Pavillon de l'Aurore continues gracing my desk, leaning up against the wall next to the window where I may keep an eye on it and anticipate the pleasure of getting it turning on the morrow when the electrician will have fixed the plug that will put the reading machine in operation. In the mean time I keep my eye on Sceaux awaiting the serenade that will be mine on the morrow.

Mrs. Adeline Cloutier of Oaklawn plantation died at 92 yesterday was the mother of C. Vernon Cloutier and Oaklawn, you may recall, is the plantation on the Bermuda and is possessed of the lovely avenue of live oaks. I must knock off a column tonight and perhaps



08121

15481

I shall have something to say about Oaklawn and perhaps not.

This morning at 11 some gentleman from Baton Rouge appeared at my door. I am sorry I forget his name for he was a nice person. He said Margaret Dixon had recommended that he drop off here to take some pictures and I gave him a swirl around various photogenes. He used to spend time in Mississippi, --Natchez, especially, and I suppose we could have talked hours about personalities and places there, had I been less busy.

Right after dinner, J. H. sent four ladies from Monroe to see me. They were very pleasant and two of them mentioned that Miss Kate Perkins had taught them History.

I was sorry to learn today that State Senator Sylvan Friedman is afflicted with Parkinson's Disease and at the moment has little control of his nerves. I don't know if Science has done anything to arrest or cure that malady but the few people I have known who were sufferers never did improve although some of them had top medical attention. It has chanced that the people I have known who had to contend with the thing were perhaps in their 80's and rather frail physically but Sylvan is perhaps 50 and always presented the picture of stout physique.

Vegetation is said to be about a month behind this year but even so things are coming along although leisurely. Today we had mustard greens from the garden and they were delicious. I noticed some blossoms on the tomato plants today which, of course, is only a promise but nevertheless a pleasant one.

The Parishes immediately to the north of Natchitoches were warned of hailstorms as between 6 and 12 o'clock tonight. We don't need any hail but a gentle sprinkle would make the bell peppers happy. I gave up trying to extract any news from the radio around 8 o'clock inasmuch as I succeeded only in bringing in static only and no news at all. It is still lightening at a great rate but no thunder accompanies the flashes so perhaps all the moisture, frozen and liquid, will remain in the distance.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned this evening, asking if she might pay her respects on Wednesday instead of Thursday. She also read a chapter from Painter's Froust, the section covering the year 1912 which is about the time Froust was getting "a l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleur" in final manuscript form. From occasional references to Renaldo Hahn, I find myself wishing I had read of his things before this. Virgil Thompson mentions seeing Hahn in 1930 when both were in Spain, trying to get a boat to America but not together. I know if Hahn is still among the living or not. But I shall be among the lseepy if I don't dive into the ice box before attempting a column.....

15482

15482

Sunday, May 5th, 1968.

# Memorandum:

Exceedingly fair with the thermometer in the 50's but still in the 50's by night, being a little too cool for the vegetables to make great strides. I was so glad to get the wiring on the Reading Machine attended to on Saturday. That made it possible for me to continue with the full enjoyment of my natal day since I could engineer a Sceaux musicale on Saturday evening which lasted for hours, much to my delight. Verily, there is nothing like music of a particular era to provide one with that particular atmosphere and since the 17th and 18th are our favorites, the musicale provided me with both for after the Sceaux concert. I told myself that for an interlude, there could be nothing finer than the Mar ly one and after that had been concluded, I had to do the Sceaux one all over again.

This afternoon I told myself I would treat myself to repeat performances and did enjoy as much as was possible until interruptions began. Happily, the same musicians that provided yesterday's delights will be summoned back again for tonight before beard-folding time and thus I shall be able to enjoy the same delights all over again. Mrs. Chopin 'phoned last night to say she had gone to Alexandria during the afternoon where she had run across some pastery she thought I might enjoy and asked if she might deliver same on Sunday afternoon at 3. She might indeed. At a quarter to 3 came a tap on my door this afternoon. It was Sister who had just bown in from Breau Bridge. She chatted for about 10 minutes and then had to go see something about her car. At 3:15, Mrs. Chopin arrived, she who is always right on time. She didn't have to explain she had encountered Sister at the gate and thus had been delayed. I guess both ladies have known each other a long time although I am not sure that they were acquainted during the years when Mrs. Chopin lived with her family at what is now Mildred McCoy's Bayou Folks Museum. Mrs. Chopin's people owned that place in those years and there was another owner between the time they sold it and the Wenks bought it. I hope you were able to hear some of the music including "A" which is like a melody which, according to the paper, was to be included.....



15483

An hour and a half ride on the family merry-go-round  
as between this side of the page and the other removes all memory as to  
matters touched upon up to now and so I hope you  
will simply charge it off to senility if I repeat myself from here to  
the bottom of the page.

On Saturday Mrs. Randolph Jones died. She has fought a  
long battle with cancer and although terribly thin, apparently  
won over that foe but succumbed to heart trouble. Besides  
her husband, Randolph, she leaves a grown daughter and two or three  
other children, -- young teenagers. It was her brother-in-law, Bill Jones  
who died a few months back and Bill and Randolph's sister in  
Washington who died about the same time.

Sylvia, -- Mrs. Randolph Jones, was as pretty a person as her mother and  
her grown daughter. Even more rabid hill billies who never had anything  
but unpleasant things about the mulatto, have gone so far as to say that  
Sylvia was the prettiest person they ever saw. She taught at  
Saint Mathew's for a number of years and, even as in the case of Natalie,  
one wondered why she undertook teaching while there was undoubtedly ample funds  
raising a family since there was undoubtedly ample funds  
in the family cash box.

Along with the brownies and pastries Mrs. Chopin brought was  
a cheese-apple roll cake, the like of which I had never tasted before  
and which I found delicious. Perhaps you are acquainted with this variety of baked goodie. It is made  
like a jelly roll cake with a measure of applesauce in the dough and  
small bits of apple sprinkled over the cake itself. In place  
of the jelly as in a jelly roll cake, this cake has cottage  
cheese or Philadelphia cream cheese spread over the dough before it is  
rolled up and the finished product when finally sliced,  
presents as delicious a morsel as one could imagine. If this type of cake appears in modern bake shops or if you know a bout  
it from other places and recall its name, I should be glad to hear about it.

And speaking of Natalie reminds me to say that I have tried to  
establish contact with her every day since the Columbia  
clippings came to hand. I never seem to catch anyone at home.  
Possibly she and her husband have been out of town. I shall  
continue trying.

Tonight the Ed Sullivan show was scheduled to run an  
hour or an hour and a half in celebration of Irving Berlin's 80th  
birthday. I hope you were able to hear some of the music including  
"A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody" which, according to the  
paper, was to be included.....

15484

Monday, May 6th, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair but oddly cool, sort of 50-ish by night and  
70-ish by day. The sunshine gave pleasant heat in a sheltered  
place but a cool East wind made long sleeves comfortable. Tonight  
the waxing moon is just grand but the temperature is more  
like October than May.

Shreveport left for home this afternoon and great was  
the satisfaction all around.

Bootsie Gay, -- remember her, -- well, anyhow  
Carmen told me today that Nez Chaplin told her that Toosie Millspaugh  
told her that Bootsie Gay, recently domiciled in  
Denver with her daughter, is returning to Natchitoches  
with her daughter to take up residence there. Bootsie used to run the  
Candle Shop in New Orleans and has been running with the  
bottle ever since. Artistic and unstable, she flashes across  
the skies like a comet, attracting attention by those seeing  
her flash by, while nobody, including Bootsie, has any idea where she might  
be heading and seemingly mighty few people, including  
herself, not caring. Why Bootsie should be forever peeping out  
from under Toosie's wing, nobody seems to understand. It  
was Toosie who brought Bootsie to see me a long time  
ago and I, for one, was never the happier for the contact. I  
really don't need to see her again at this late date but I have no do  
Toosie will be bringing her down this way unless I head her off.

The Kysers returned from south Louisiana on Sunday.  
They are spending a week in town before traveling on to  
Oklahoma for medical check-ups and thence to  
Illinois to see about farm operations up there.  
Happily for everybody, the Chamber of Commerce has asked  
four people to turn out some kind of a brochure in  
color for distribution generally and for tourists  
in particular. John has been asked to supply  
photographs, I. S. Willard to contribute the  
Art work and Thelma and Carmen to handle the text. I am



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Memorandum

especially glad that John was asked to round up the pictures because it will give him something to do in a field in which he is good but also because it will provide him with associations in town at a time when he feels somewhat let down. S. Willard is capable of doing the decorative designs and, of course, Thelma and Carmen ought to know their way around in the text to be compiled.

Tomorrow the Board of the Hysterical Ladies is being entertained at luncheon by Mrs. Kilpatrick at the President's residence at Northwestern. As a member of the Board, Thelma will be among those present and the new President of Northwestern will find herself entertaining the wife of the former President in the residence where Thelma entertained with such grace for so many years.

Tonight's radio reports that the Nat Turner rebellion book received this year's Pulitzer award and that the Memoires of former Ambassador Kennon's was also honored. Off hand it would appear that by this decision of the jury, two books of historical importance got the prizes since, I suppose, the Nat Turner opus is definitely within the bracket of History. I was impressed that no award was made for Drama in this year's go-round.

And speaking of the Turner item brings up the reference in the enclosed clipping wherein one gathers that "Twelve Years a Slave" is already off the press. I trust the copy ordered for little Miss Lee may be forth-coming shortly. A couple of weeks back I wrote L. S. U. Press on the subject but as yet have not been favored with a response.

There was a call this afternoon from L. S. Willard who had many things to say on quite a variety of subjects with tangents developing along the various pathways to such an extent that I found myself quite lost in trying to pull together what things should be joined and what things should be not pieced together. There was quite a long rigamarole about an exhibition of books, formerly belonging to Aunt Willie, to be displayed in the Parish Library and somehow these were to be spread out in connection with a couple of Paisley shawls belonging to L. Storm, along with biographical notes concerning that lady's activities in relation to the establishment of the Louisiana State Library, all of which sounded doubly fascinating since I understood mighty little about what the Willard explanation entailed. Perhaps the local newspaper will eventually straighten it all out and we can start from the beginning and avoid the tangents in the printed piece.....

15486

15486

Tuesday, May 7th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and cool.

As you may have already noticed, the old typewriter is back in service again.

James put in an appearance at 11 o'clock this morning, remaining for dinner. J. H. ate with us at the big house and it was all very pleasant. Celeste was attending the luncheon at the President's residence at Northwestern.

James had several amusing tales to tell. It seems that when they went to spend the day at Barriarwood last week, Mrs. Crabtree prepared a fine dinner which the three of them took with them, baked chicken, a roast, fruit salade and heaven knows what all. All the different courses were transported in plastic containers, the chickens to be warmed in the oven and the salade chilled in the ice box on their arrival.

Carrie wanted to have a finger in the doings and when nobody was looking, least of all Carrie herself, she plopped the big old plastic container with its cover tightly on, right into the oven where the chicken was warming. The heat wrecked the salade container but, aside from the warmth around the edges of the thing, the inside part of the salade was still fairly cool when Mrs. Crabtree discovered where it was and hastily withdrew it from the inside of the stove. That's pure Carrie all over again.

The Registers dined with the Kysers and Dr. Phillips on Sunday night, the Kysers have brought home some huge shrimps from New Orleans. John was bubbling over with enthusiasm about a new tour of Africa which some travel agency has just cooked up. He wanted Thelma to agree to go with him for the summer but Thelma turned thumbs down on such a thought. Kay, however, took John's side in showing great impatience about making such a journey and John and Kay had a wonderful time going over the agenda. I suppose it is too much to expect that Kay and John should attempt such an hejira together but one thing is cer-



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tain, neither Thelma nor James are dreaming of getting tangled up in such a whirligig. It seems to me I can almost picture Thelma and James waving their mouchoirs in Goodbye salutes to the departing travelers at the air port and at the same time imagine what it would be like when Kay and John touched down in Africa and began comparing notes about their several aches and pains.

Like everybody else, I, too, was astonished to learn that Saturday's Kentucky Derby winner turned out to be Tuesday's disqualified contestant. It does seem as though a final decision should have been made long before this late date. The radio says this is the first time such a thing ever happened in the Derby and my guess is that it is likely to be the last in a long, long time.

In the case of the lady Governor of Alabama, her death was somehow unexpected although her prolonged illness had been generally known and yet I had somehow not expected her to be removed by death. I assume her husband will find it tougher going in his bid for the Presidency on the third ticket.

As for today's returns on the Indiana primary contest, I do not expect to tune in on that story until a substantial number of the votes have been counted. While it will be interesting to learn how many votes the various candidates received, the fact that Mr. Humphry's name is not on the ticket suggests that whatever the totals may be, they will not cut much ice in the general scheme of things since I suppose that neither Mr. Kennedy or Mr. McCarthy will receive the nomination in Chicago.

I shouldn't be a bit surprised if sufficient delegates in both parties may already be pledged in sufficient numbers to guarantee nomination by messrs Humphry and Nixon so that all the scuffling between now and convention time is just about so much shadow-boxing.

The tall white vase, holding a fine bouquet of grandifloras, graces this desk and in about one minute, I am going to serenade same with a musicale of Sceaux....

15488

15488

Wednesday, May 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with occasional sprinkles from 4 o'clock this morning straight through the day. Fortunately, the thermometer is momentarily a little higher, --64 to 80 and vegetation will respond to that -- if it lasts.

The nicest thing about the day was the letter from Lyme and the beautiful card with the lovely verse which I think is just grand.

I am so sorry to learn about the bout with the virus. Such a high temperature lasting so long is frightening. It is so good to know that a physician was summoned and that the good Samaritan did so much to make things run along as smoothly as possible. I was re-assured as to the progress the patient was making on the Sabbath since consideration was being given to venturing out into the big busy world on Monday. I continue holding the thought that one was well on the way to recovery before such an effort to stir abroad was undertaken.

I am so interested in everything mentioned about doings in the Ile de France area. Last night Mrs. Walker called, asking me if I should like her to read me an article in the Saturday Review about Andre Malraux, written by those two gentlemen who turned out the book about the burning of Paris. I shall try to get the date of the publication and, if possible, I shall try to get the article itself and send it along. The reason I mention this particular article is because mention is made in it of the scrubbing up of public buildings in and around Paris and that it was Malraux was the person who instigated the doings and carried it through much to everyone's applause although plenty of people opposed the idea when it was first brought up for consideration. In the opening of the article, it is stated that Malraux, his children dead, now lives at Versailles, along with his two Siamese cats, and drives to his office in the Palais Royal six days a week in his official limousine.

It was nice that you were able to get off messages in one form or another to auntie. Poor child! I do hope



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that having some one near her, equally interested in the lives of others near and dear to both, she herself will find things pleasanter in the days ahead.

And I am enchanted with the account of all the elegant pictures mentioned in Sunday's letter. It is so thrilling to know that such splendid things are being brought into color reproduction which go so far in quickening the interest in so many quarters and make one look forward to visiting them over and over again both in person and in the mind's eye.

I thought little Miss Lee would be especially interested in knowing that not only Lestan loved the poem but another person did, too. When the secretary had finished reading it and, at my request, had re-read it, the secretary to my astonishment asked Lestan if it would be possible to have that poem taken down by dictation and Lestan said it was possible and when the secretary departed, he appeared to be floating on air, so delighted and moved he had been by the verse. How little can the world guess how far a sunbeam travels.

Mrs. Walker inquired last night if she might make a round down this way today, bringing a member of the English Department faculty with her. I thought I had misunderstood the matter of faculty membership when the young lady was presented for from her manner, costume and all I was under the impression she must be a young teen-ager and definitely a student rather than an instructor. Her wholeget-up was so girlish I was really surprised to hear her refer to her children, her teaching experiences in Ohio, California and Heaven knows where all. They bore gifts including Taylor's port and a gallon pitcher of plastic to hold "cooley" and plastic goblets to go with it.

The moon is so pretty, the clouds having dissolved, I think I shall take a turn in the Ghana garden and then call it a day, a very happy day, thanks to Lyme....

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15490

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Thursday, May 9th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Temperature in the mild upper 70's with occasional gleams of sunshine, interspersed with substantial showers all day and I liked both for the sunshine was pleasant and the rain we didn't need was sufficient to discourage road runners, thus providing me with an opportunity to do leisurely a heap of things I have been putting off from day to day.

Today's post was pleasantly plump and nicest of all was the message from little Miss Lee, coming so hard on the heels of yesterday's wonderful letter and exquisite both of which I have re-read again today with so much joy that today's message simply set the seal on my existence, a seal of happiness that makes my heart full of gratitude for everything for which Lyme stands.

I scarcely need report that the news in today's message, --the discovery of the situation of that remarkable residence mentioned in Life, simply floored me. Nobody but little Miss Lee could have made such a discovery and just to think that it is somewhere in the neighborhood of Marly-le-Roi. Naturally I am bubbling over with anticipation to learn additional particulars. How wonderful it is to discover such chapters of knowledge about unknown places and at the same time making me wonder the more that this or that person we know actually declares one prefers to know nothing about places to be visited.

Among the cards of natal day greetings there were a couple of humorous ones, one from Eve Wood of Wichita and another from Evelyn Hanlon of New Orleans, sister of Mrs. Chopin. I shall enclose them if I can round them up. There was also a letter from Mrs. Moore's daughter, Camilla Emerick, "the girl I may have married". In her letter she mentions the death of Mary Lambdin which came as a great shock. I shall write a note to her husband, "Jeff" as Mary called him although his name is Samuel Hopkins Lambdin.

When I used to stay with them at Edgewood, sometimes Mary and I, sometimes Mary, Jeff and I, would walk up the old trace road from Edgewood to Mistletoe where we used to survey the old house and gardens and speculate on how best it could be restored to its 18th century beauty and brought up to 20th century comfort. Those were busy days when at the same time I was designing Miss Myra Smith's camellia garden and doing considerable research on old Natchez more or less all at the same time.



15491

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Naturally I was sorry to learn of Mrs. Moore's mis-  
adventure with the gas stove and I must drop her a line tonight,  
too. It was good to learn from her daughter's  
letter that Mrs. Moore continues working, that is to say,  
spending her afternoons at Connelly's Tavern which,  
although tiring, must keep her in constant contact with  
pilgrims, many of whom, no doubt, provide her with  
interesting contacts.

My neighbors across the fence left this morning about  
9:30 for Houma in south Louisiana, to  
attend some kind of an R. E. A. pow-wow. I haven't  
seen the lady in two or three days, she being so busy with a  
number of things, getting rigged up for the outing. Her  
servant phoned me about 9:30 to say the lady had left  
a package for me which she thought I would like to  
pick up on my return from the Post Office. It's  
a prettily wrapped package which I haven't opened. I  
know it contains a shirt since, on Monday, I guess it  
was, the lady was complaining about all the things she had  
to do at the beauty parlor and what not so that she simply  
had no time to think of birthday gifts. When I suggested  
we skip it because of present pressures, she became cross like  
a child and declared I wasn't helping her at all. Thinking  
to her husband might have something around that could be pressed  
into service, I hazarded the thought a shirt might  
solve the problem. Quite tartly I was asked what kind of a shirt  
and I said any kind would do just fine but I made a  
mistake when, in response to what color, I said  
brown one like the one I was wearing. It seems, she  
blurted out that I shouldn't wear a brown shirt and  
that a white one would do better and I agreed to  
that, too, as I should have had she mentioned  
it. With such preliminaries, the starch, shall we say,  
thus taken out of the transaction, I am in no hurry to  
open the package. Nevertheless I must confess I feel  
sorry for the human being whose development comes to  
a halt at the age of 12 or thereabouts.

I didn't hear from the Registers today but that did  
not surprise me since, like little Miss Lee, they are  
forever making natal day observations throughout each  
wholesome month.

A glance toward the white garden reveals the white  
ribbon grass, now shoulder high, is glistening in the  
moonlight. The skies must have cleared. I  
shall take a turn in the Ghana garden, my thoughts  
vibrating in the direction of Lyme.....

15492

15492

Friday, May 10th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Damp, mild cloudy. During the night  
Hatchitoches had 4 and a half inches more of rain and we  
had our share, the occasional flash-floods  
continuing through today. August emptied the  
rain gauge, forgetting what it registered but I  
suppose at least a couple of inches.

I seem unable to regulate the margins at all since  
the machine was repaired and since I was never any good  
at observing the right hand ones, I appear equally incapable now  
of doing much about the left hand ones.

There were tornado warnings for the Houma area from  
11:30 am to 4:30 p.m. and some for a shorter period in the  
Alexandria area. The clerk understood the folks across the fence  
were leaving south Louisiana this morning but since they  
did not put in an appearance before supper time, it is assumed  
the weather may have discouraged them from getting into the  
big road until weather warnings were withdrawn.

Thelma called this morning, having "only a minute" but  
wanting to say Howdy. The contact lasted exactly fifty five minute  
in which she related no end of interesting facts, none of  
much import. For example, she spoke of Mrs. Walker  
having been to her house, --Thelma's, --on Tuesday night. She  
finally got around to say what she had probably not intended to men-  
tion, to wit, that she doubted if Mrs. Walker would find faculty  
meetings to her liking or to the faculties liking for her,  
once she undertakes teaching. She said further that  
the reason Mrs. Walker is fishing for any kind of an  
appointment in the Florida school system is because she  
simply cannot be employed in the Louisiana system which, it seems,  
according to some comparatively new Pelican State law, prohibits  
the signing up of any teacher over the age of 50 and I believe  
Mrs. Walker is 51 or 54. It seems that in Louisiana, if one  
can be signed up prior to the 50th year, they may continue  
teaching until 65 but no new-comer can get a place on the  
teaching staff of any college if over 50.

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The Squire dropped in late this afternoon, bearing strawberry wine and a flock of big heavy ice tea glasses. I had broken my last big, heavy glass, -- I like the larger sized ones since they hold sufficient ice to last through the evening so I do not have to get up from my desk and replenish.

I think it was helpful for the visitor to be able to relax a bit and blowing off steam is always beneficial if it can be done in the presence of someone who vaguely appreciates various problems such as, for example, the statement via Suddie that the Communists are poisoning American toothpaste and the American dollar is to be swept away completely by the end of the next five weeks and so on and so on. I think Suddie is having fun in the realization she is being able to put her girl friend into a tailspin. The legal aid in the Crescent City was summoned by telephone in the middle of the night to fly up immediately to give instant advice about staying off the toothpaste terrors and saving the coinage and crack-pot radio purveyors of "gloom and doom" were contacted to come this way as guests for a few days to explain to anyone who will listen just how it is we are tottering on the brink of complete destruction at the hands of the Communists. How anyone living so close as the Squire to such unpredictable carryings-on can maintain any kind of mental stability is a wonder.

On the brighter side, today's post brought a copy of the Anglo-American Art Museum catalogue for their exhibition of American primitive art, shown during March at L. S. U. Among other examples of such art are two pictures from the brush of Clementine Hunter. She is also mentioned in the text, the writer of the piece mentioning that he first saw Hunter canvases at the home of Carl Carmer in Irvington-on-Hudson. I haven't finished the text as yet but shall do so shortly and send it, the catalogue, that is, along. The item was sent without covering note by Carmen's sister-in-law of Baton Rouge, Mrs. H. Payne Breazeale. It seems odd that neither James nor I should have heard anything about this show in view of the number of people we know in Baton Rouge.

And now for a little musical interlude at Socaur and then to my downy pillow.....

15494

15494

Sunday, May 12th, 1968.

# Memorandum:

In the mild 70's for temperature but as for humidity it would seem to be 100 although mere rain does not, they say, indicate how much humidity may obtain. Be that as it may, it has rained right along every day, perhaps a couple of inches every 24 hours with every now and then the sun peeping through for a few minutes and then darting back to give the rain clouds a chance to resume their business.

The nicest thing about the weekend was the lovely board from Lyne, as of Thursday, showing the Botanical Garden on one side and revealing a delightful chronicle of natal greetings on the other. It was such a delightful way to bring the week to a close and such a pretty card with four and conservatory on the reverse, a delightful vignette that wavered gently on my desk while I hammered this keyboard and a scene full of repose when night came on and I could tilt the picture where I could see it to advantage as I relaxed for another musicale at Socaur.

In the same post came a little flat box of chocolates from Esther and Helen. I don't know in what political bracket those two ladies hide but one might assume Democratic, where Leston so often finds himself. That is perhaps why the Republica elephant just to show what he could do, apparently sat on the package while it was enroute. Happily the package had ample wrappings of slick paper inside the box and around the chocolates for which the candy was squashed, one could scoop up its merged units and so enjoy the deliciousness of the merged individual units. I can't imagine how those girls ever got information about the natal day business for Mrs. Walker declares she hasn't even heard from them in quite a while and certainly did not ever pass along such information. If packages must be crushed by the Republica elephant, I am certainly glad that animal selected the chocolates and not the Fragonard for parking..

And speaking of Mesdames Lape and Gavin, I find



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myself often hoping that somehow sometime acquaintance may be established as between them and little Miss Lee. Let's keep such a prospect turning over in our minds so that it may be to the fore whenever a circumstance falls within the realm of a realizable prospect.

On Saturday noon between showers, Celeste dashed over in raincoat and rubbers to ask me if I would receive some friends of some of her in-laws living somewhere below Alexandria who had phoned asking if they might bring a young couple from France for a tour. A couple of hours would seem sufficient length of time for them to get here and she was going to town for the afternoon. And so, between showers, the folks arrived, reaching here about 4:30 or 5 and remaining over an hour. They were all very pleasant but I stuck to the tour and don't know yet which section of France the couple hailed.

This afternoon about 3, two young gentlemen from Utah put in an appearance. They were Mormons and were friends of Lloyd Wenk. I suppose they were in their 20's and very considerable but could not, of course, refrain from asking me if I had ever given thought to becoming a Mormon. I confessed I believed in Mormonism and any other branch of religion that gave something to its converts and I knew that Mormonism had done a heap for some of my friends. I added, however, that I still remained so old fashioned as to be content with the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule and the young gentlemen politely dropped their efforts to convert me.

Fugabou is in the Alexandria hospital and quite ill, I believe. Maude, his wife, says he is suffering from having worked in the mixtu used in spraying pecan trees. The doctors believe it is a kidney or liver complaint. He goes for weeks without eating anything, spurning food when offered him because he has preferred to stick to wine exclusively, all around the clock for months on end. I doubt if he ever weighed 100 pounds and he certainly has not been getting fat on alcohol during the past 30 years I have known him.

On Saturday morning the clerk arrived bearing a splendid pound cake his wife had baked for my birthday. I was glad it came late in the week and not at the same time the Chopin pastries did last weekend. Wont you have a dab of pound cake, a sip of coolie, a deep breath of magnolias while one relaxes for a go at things at Soeaur.....

Monday, May 13th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Warm in the swing between 70 and 90 with frequent changes from sunshine to showers and back again. All day a line of thunder storms have been running east and west or rather from west to east on lines just south of Alexandria and north of Shreveport which leaves us more or less in the middle without the volume of water the shower centers are producing and, by the same token, none of the cooling processes that center in the line of storms. We are promised something of the same patter for the morrow.

I pause to give a little more margin on the left, not being sure if I am reaching the margin or not in the weather report.

It was such a delightful surprise to discover Friday's letter from Lyme in today's post.

First off, let me say how much I appreciate your thoughtfulness in bringing in Monsieur Perrault. I have read the text from the Soeaur cover twice and intend reading it more than twice again. I am shame-faced for all the complaining I do about faulty absorption of printed material for it does seem as though I am always making a great fuss on that score. The truth is that a couple of factors contribute to my failure to grasp all that is written, first, because interruptions may honestly cause the skipping of a line or a paragraph when I return to the secretary who, quite possibly, sometimes skips a few things on his own hook, and

second, it frequently happens that on the first reading, if I have a rather inept helper, he may spell out words, some of which I am perfectly familiar, as in the case of Perrault, but the enunciation may be so poor as to make the whole procedure more like a great big guessing game than anything else. This is especially true when a flock of letters, as pronounced indistinctly by the reader, may all sound pretty much alike, as in the case of b, c, d, e, g, p, t, v and so on. As the letters spin from the lips, it is my business to keep a half dozen or more possibilities such as those indicated above, all dancing in the air like a juggler tossing upshimmering balls or dumbbells, hoping to fit them into their rightful places as the spelling rattles along and often, I fear, making a mighty poor showing of my efforts. I the majority of cases I hold aside what has been read but



15497

not comprehended in order to have a second or third go at things  
when a more adept assistant passes this way.

Your mention of Natalie reminds me to say that yesterday  
or I guess it was Saturday, I finally succeeded in reaching her  
on the 'phone. She said she had had little luck in trying to  
reach me during the past few weeks. She said she has been having  
her house painted inside and the floors done over. Little  
Miss Lee and Lestan don't have to be told what a hurly-burly  
that can be. August 4th seems to be the date of her son's wedding  
and on the following day the groom expects to join the Marines  
until Christmas by which time the groom is expected to be  
located at some camp where his bride will join him. Like all  
these military and pre-military marriages, this one  
sounds as odd as all the others so far as the time element is  
concerned. I hope the youngsters know what they are doing but  
off hand it seems to me 99 percent of them use mighty  
poor judgement.

I need scarcely need to say what you already know, to wit, that  
all the particulars about the pillar-house first brought to our  
attention in Life, fill me with infinite delight. Needless to  
say, after an initial reading, I have tucked it into my folio  
in the armoire against the first unsuspecting secretary of intelligence  
passing this way. I think it is perfectly wonderful that you have  
come up with such an abundance of data and I propose to digest  
all of it within a day or two. I think there is a clue to  
my comprehension as to the approximate location of the  
property -- the word Desert having provided the key. I am  
so happy to have all this account of the place, providing, as it does,  
a further widening of understanding of the entire  
region in which it is situated, like the adding of  
another colorful piece of mosaic in the fabulous  
panorama which is 17th and 18th century Ile de  
France.

And so our little feathered friends will be having company for a  
while during the impending vacation season. I'll  
bet all of them will like that and I hope the visitation doesn't  
complicate things for their hostess.

Before the day had advanced very far and right on through to  
the end, I got the results of a TK broadcast about  
a ye olde plantation over some Shreveport station last night,  
pilgrims galore in spite of the weather and I brace myself against  
more as soon as the rains subside. Again my thanks for such a  
wonderful post, unlocking so many doors to happiness.....

15498

Tuesday, May 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

70 to 90 with lots of blue sky and soads of humidity at  
and only an occasional sprinkle all day.

Long before now I intended thanking you for letting me  
know about the name of Joe Smith appearing in the news recently  
in regard to his elevation to the status of member of  
the board of the publishers of the U. S. Yes, I am acquainted  
with him. It was he who purchased Blythe's house after the death  
of Dr. Rand.

And mention of Blythe reminds me to say that there was a letter  
from her in today's post, probably in response to a recent note  
I penned her in regard to the illness of her sister, Willie White.  
The secretaries all came at different times but each at the  
wrong time and so I shall not get around to run through today's  
letters until the morrow which will be soon enough. From  
the cancellation marks on the envelopes, most of the letters seem  
to be from towns I never heard and the same may probably be said  
for the writers of same.

James 'phoned this afternoon which is probably another  
way of saying that he will be making another round one of these days.  
He mentioned having received a letter from Janet Kyser in which  
she thanked him for having sent her the story about Thelma and John in  
the Times-Picayune, -- the one which has already reached your true hand.  
I mention this letter to James from Janet because  
it throws a somewhat unusual light upon the Kyser, -- parents  
and daughter. Janet mentioned she had seen her parents last Sunday when  
they stopped off in Shreveport for a little chat before going  
on toward Oklahoma and Illinois. James had Janet that  
he had no doubt she had seen the Picayune article, but since he had an  
extra copy, he thought perhaps she might also  
enjoy having an extra one. Surprisingly enough Janet reported  
that not only had she not seen the article but that her parents  
had never mentioned it to her when they were there day before  
yesterday which certainly seems odd.

Janet went on to say that she and her girl friend  
with whom she shares a home in Shreveport, that is to say, a home they own  
together, are planning to spend the autumn, winter and spring in  
Natchitoches, taking a house in Pecan Park, while going  
to Northwestern to pursue their master's degree. I believe  
Thelma and John have an extra house or garage a tucked away  
apartment on their 608 Williams Avenue property where they  
.....



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live but obviously the girls aren't going to get tangled  
up in parental surroundings.

It's week after next that the John Cottons with their  
secretary are to be guests for several days at the  
Perrault house when they will be invited to tell everyone  
in town all about the perils of impending poisoning  
of toothpaste by the Communists and such drollery. I think  
their hostess is using mighty good judgement in getting  
tangled up with all this tomfoolery but excellence in  
judgement doesn't always manifest itself too brilliantly  
in certain types of minds whose physical age would  
suggest greater mental maturity.

Carmen called me this morning to read me a letter from  
her sister-in-law of Baton Rouge. The letter  
stated that this coming week a flock of canvases and boards were  
being forwarded from an Art store to me in order that  
I might pass them along to Clementine Hunter who was requested  
to paint a number of pictures, the subject matter for each being  
detailed on an appended memorandum enclosed in the letter  
to Carmen so that the latter might issue instructions  
to the artist after I had delivered the canvases to the artist. If  
that isn't going around robin hood's barn to get no where,  
I have never heard of such a thing.

One of the picture's order specified that it must have an Indian  
in it. That gave Carmen pause, taking time out to ask me if I  
thought Miss Hunter had an concept of what an Indian might be  
or what an Indian might look like. I put the same question to James  
when he called and he said he felt sure he knew what the artist would  
bring forth, --not so much an Indian as an engine since  
both words are pronounced about the same in Hunter parlance and she has  
seen an engine and could "mark" one off with gusto. Something  
tells me Rita Breazeale is going to have some mild surprises  
when and if her somewhat extensive order is executed and  
delivered up to her.

Mat Hertzog of Magnolia plantation, --Dee's husband, -- is  
ailing. He was in Shreveport for some kind of a horse show. When getti  
off the elevator in the hotel, he tripped, breaking a  
wrist and doing something to his shoulder. With Shreveport having  
lots of hospitals, he was taken to Cabrini in Alexandria, --not  
seriously hurt, I believe, but painfully injured.

For the past hour I have been trying to get in touch with Mrs.  
Walker about a column but the Delphin kids on this party line are havin'  
a prolonged forlito. The Delin TV and the TV of the person with whom the  
connection is made are watching the program as they chat, comparing  
expressions of delight at the way the cowboys are mowing down the Indians  
and keeping the line tied up tight enough.....

12201

15500

Wednesday, May 15th, 1968

Memorandum:  
Low 70's to mid 90's, fair and wonderfully humid.

The nicest thing about yesterday's primaries in  
Nebraska seems to be that all of the several candidates  
seem pleased with the results although perhaps Mr.  
Rockefeller wasn't overjoyed with his somewhat small showing.  
Now if all the candidates running for office in November can be  
equally pleased with the results of that election, the  
world may well rub its eyes in astonishment.

I take it on another front that "Tall Charlie" must  
have fallen out with Moscow or, if he hasn't, is simply enjoying  
the stirring up of a hornets' nest, what with speech in  
Roumania today, telling the assembly that every nation  
has a right to express itself. I have no doubt  
the Rumanians liked that even though the Russians may not have been  
too enthusiastic on that particular point.

From news reports, the Sorbonne students continue expressing their  
voices with a measure of strength. I know  
nothing about the merits of their case for I don't  
even know what their case is but if it's about bring-  
ing that institution up to a contemporary curriculum, I  
suppose their may be some reason for their demands since everyone  
seems to agree that that institution has not kept pace  
with the times in providing ample and up-to-date equip-  
ment, housing facilities and so on. If the European  
Common Market could be broadened and a Common Defense be  
worked out, it would seem as though a lot  
of money being squandered on defense budgets could be  
put into various improvements including education that  
might be beneficial all around.

On the garden front, what with the warmer nights and the  
excessively high humidity, everything is jumping out  
of the ground at a great rate. A busy morning prevented me  
from doing much planting, especially as I needed a little more sunshine



00221

15501

to dry the soil in many places. With August's help, I expected to do quite a bit of transplanting during the afternoon but on trying to locate him, I discovered he had been whisked away to labor in town where the new house is being planned. Perhaps I shall have better luck on the morrow although I seem to have quite a few appointments for the 16th, and, of course, there are always the imponderables.

I must say I am late in planting gourds for I haven't put any seeds in the ground as yet although in a recent column I mentioned the first week in May as a good time for such business. When I made that recommendation, I had not expected we would be having so many April showers in May and much of the gourd garden has been under frequent inundations thus far this month.

There was a little incident at the college of no importance at all but I want to mention it anyway. At the time of the death of Martin Luther King when Federal flags were lowered to half mast, some of the few colored students at the college consulted the President of the institution, asking if they might lower the college flag. Mr. Kilpatrick said they might. The colored students did so but some white students passing that way, raised the flag. A little later the colored students, noticing it had been raised, lowered to half mast again and some white students rushed up and started raising it again. One can readily understand how the pot might well have boiled over or the flag worn out with such doings and so, according to orders from the President, the flag was removed entirely until after the funeral. I guess the President should have put his foot down to the white students but I suppose he thought it better to avoid any controversy and so solved the matter the way he did.

And now for a dab of ice cream and a swing with Soeaur and that will be it for this day.....

00221

Fugabou's obituary

15502

Thursday, May 16th, 1968.

Memorials to mid 90's with clouds in the morning and fair skies this afternoon and tonight.

His name was Herbert Cyriac, the last name spelled in various ways, such as Cyriague, Cyriak and so on. Few knew him by that name, however, Fugabou being the best known and next to that Lanyap.

He died this morning at 6 in the Alexandria Charity Hospital, to which he was taken on Monday.

I don't know his age but it was probably between 54 and 58. Once, when casting about to establish a birth certificate, he told me that he and Sister were born at the same time. She made her initial bow in 1913. Sometime later he told me he was sure he and Sister were the same age so far as the day of their birth was concerned but while each was born on the same day, he wasn't sure if they were both born in the same year.

He had a keen mind and if he had ever gone to school a day in his life, he might well have advanced beyond the field hand status.

He was adept at solving mechanical problems, in fact, could tinker up almost anything to passable status. Without knowing the meaning of the word geography, he had a geographic sense that was quite extraordinary, as, for example, when once he had traversed a Natchez Trace, he somehow could tell where he was in relation to all the other traces and properties he had ever visited. Most people of experience I know were forever lost in the traces, no matter how frequently they traveled through them but Fugabou was never lost in them.

When just a boy, it was Fugabou who served as driver and general handy man for Lyle and Eddie Suydam as they traveled up and down and around Louisiana and Mississippi while Lyle rounded up material at county court houses and Eddie did his sketching. They used an old Ford for transportation and often has Lyle laughingly demonstrated how Fugabou managed things for he was so short his legs didn't reach from the seat to the floor when the Fords of that day required the pressure of the driver's foot on the peddle Fugabou, standing on his right foot and pressing down with his left, would brace his back or hips against the car seat, clutch the steering wheel with his hands higher than his head, pull himself by his arms up high enough to see in which direction he was heading and so take off



15503

15503

with no particular surprise that he was traveling but bubbling over with glee that the car was lunging ahead.

Often he drove Miss Cam on trips of several hundred miles and was always equal to making any repairs which the car might require along the way. When there were short overnight trips to be made, as, for instance, to Briarwood, Fugabou could always be depended upon to find the way, -- something about which Miss Cam wouldn't have the vaguest notion, and, as at Briarwood, when night would overtake them, Fugabou could always be counted upon to find a sleeping place either with colored people in the neighborhood or in the back seat of the car. Perhaps one of his most beaming moments in Natchez when he would drive me over there would be the next morning when he would come to pick me up where ever I was staying either in the country or at Magnolia Inn in town for it never ceased to give him a thrill that I saw to it that he was registered in a hotel for colored people and he just loved such experiences where, as he never tired of explaining, "everybody called me Mister jus' like I really was and everybody was so polite and nice"

Always a heavy drinker, it is remarkable that never once in all the traveling he did, he never so much as glanced in the direction of a drink from the time he took the driver's seat going out until after he left the driver's seat after getting back home, regardless of the time involved, -- a few hours or many days.

He tried my patience time and again with his drinking when, incapable of managing a tractor, the plantation would send him to me to lend a hand at gardening. At such times when he would be waving in the breeze, I had to put my foot down to keep him from swinging a hoe for at such times he would be so high he wouldn't know vegetables from weeds and he could effect more carnage in a few minutes than I could bind up in a week.

For the past ten years I have truly marveled that he could keep going for he seemed to be mildly drunk at least three weeks out of four and often three or four months at a time, might less than a hundred pounds, eating no food, strong as an ox and tangling up more things than he could untangle.

And now Fugabou is gone, heading straight for Heaven, I have no doubt, so correct, drunk or not was his sense of geography and charming the keys to the Pearly Gates right out of Saint Peter's hands.....

15504

F. on T.V. program Alexandria  
May 13.

15504

Friday, May 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

An inch of rain between 6 and 8 o'clock this morning, followed by sunshine that set things off, followed by another inch of rain this afternoon with a cooling from the upper 80's to the lower 60's, not to mention much thunder. Radio reception accordingly leave much to be desired tonight.

Hazel Raines who is the chief assistant of the Health Center called yesterday to ask if she might bring her sister and brother-in-law of California for a little while this morning. She might. Just as they arrived at a hall came through from Louisiana Heritage and as I had lots of things on my morning program, I did what I could to attend to both parties.

Hazel asked me how I enjoyed myself on my TV program on Monday. I had to confess I didn't know I had been figuring in the ether waves. She seemed surprised I didn't know about it. I said she had tried to reach me by phone but with no success in advance of the program. How she knew about the scheduled performance, I don't know. But it seems that after failing to reach me, she had phoned the store, asking the merchant-planter to let me know about it. He told her he would be seeing me in five or ten minutes and would pass the word along. Obviously he must have forgotten the whole business.

Hazel saw the program and said it was draped around the Melrose scene with me appearing in several pictures, not to mention the likeness of the disc and much talk about the whole thing. The thing originated in Alexandria. I'm glad the disc got some free publicity and I should have appreciated it if the station had advised me in advance.

As for the Heritage phone call, it was to advise me that a new edition of the disc is being taken up shortly, -- with an introduction of some music, I believe and a general tightening up of the whole presentation. I could not get a date on the thing but one of the directors asked if he might come up to see me concerning some of the details. He might.



A second point was brought up regarding the publication of a quarterly magazine Heritage is planning, aimed primarily at the educational field, I believe. There was some talk about an article about "the disc artist" with illustrations and I was asked if the column I did about the "Battle for the Bed" might be incorporated also in the first issue of the publication together with suitable illustrations. - Some urgent message of no account being waved at me from the door by a slave while the Raines guests were around and about made the conversation, not very clear anyway, rather unsatisfactory. I shall write a letter tonight regarding the matter, suggesting that, among other things, that in formulating their plans for an educational publication that will be illustrated, they keep in mind the possibility of using large plates for the pictures which in turn might be subsequently used in another type of publication, just pictures, calling the pictorial collection "Louisiana Heritage" which ought to have a commercial appeal for the tourist trade in the Pelican State, thereby "killing two birds with one stone".

After I had folded up my beard last night there was a 'phone call from I. S. Willard with lots of "rrrrrrrrs, ahhhhhhhhhs, ohhhh did so on. She said she had been out of town for a few days and in a somewhat surprised voice inquired:

"errrrrrrrr, but you didn't get my letter, errrrrrrr  
but, let me see, errrrrrrrrrrr, well in a way I  
understand.....errrrrrrr since I guess I really  
didn't get around to write it, errrrrrrrrrrr".

It certainly is odd I failed to receive her letter that was never written. Verily, there really aren't too many I. S. Willards of my acquaintance in this world but sometimes I suspect there may be quite a few souls out in similar patterns.

Yesterday's memo goes forward at the same time this one does. Today's mail got tangled up a little so far as I was concerned, for what with pilgrims and 'phone calls, I was a few minutes later in getting to the Post office than is my custom and the postman was a little earlier than usual. I think yesterday's memos were mostly concerned with Fugyou. I learned this evening that his wake will be held in town on Saturday evening at the colored funeral home and that he will be buried on Sunday in the graveyard of St. Mary's-on-the-Bayou.

I hold the thought that Lyme weather may be less damp than it is locally and that all moves serenely.....

Sunday, May 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

After a week of so much cloudiness and rain, yesterday's and today's blue skies seemed so wonderfully blue and the sunshine so dazzling. It's cooler in the 70's and the humidity temporarily quite low

Early last week I put on my thinking cap and by dint of laborious arithmetical computation, I worked out a date in my own mind on which the peaken ought to begin laying if she intended bring forth some youngsters on June 19th. I figured four weeks would be required to do the setting. Without too much mental exertion, I could figure back four weeks from June 19th but then I encountered an impasse. This came from the fact that while I assumed four eggs would be laid, I suddenly realized I did not know if the peaken laid an egg every day or if she skipped a day inbetween. Better early than late, I told myself and so I got busy. And so I rounded up a fine cardboard box, fashioned a fine nest of hay and put it in the northwest corner of the Unicorn House where the peacocks are temporarily dwelling.

Next day when I stepped into the Unicorn House, it was obvious the timing had been correct for there was a nice white egg, --not in the special nest I had prepared, but right along beside it. 24 hours later when I took another look, I found just the one egg but on the following day there was a second one right next to the first. Apparently the magical place for the placing of the nest was correct but outside rather than inside the box. And so that is where the bird will be doing business until the eggs hatch. I shall be curious to see if the mama will pull some of the hay out of the box and really set up housekeeping in the approved manner, once she has completed the proper number of items on this go-round. If she doesn't feel like doing any interior decorating, I suppose she will be content to follow the method of the guinea atop an armoire, simply use the bare boards for the cradle. I hope the peahen isn't like that silly goose, Louella, laying a fine assortment of eggs and then letting months go by before getting around to setting the eggs are no longer any good. I am glad at least they are inside so that the old armadillo will not have a go at them this year.



15507

On Saturday morning we are all gently surprised to have a visit from Lloyd Wenk, the first time I had seen him in a couple of years, I believe. He really paid us quite a visit, remaining until mid afternoon or perhaps a little later. The purpose of his visit was to see about bringing his wife and their four offspring down here to spend their summer vacation as from June 15th for the ensuing couple of weeks which ought to carry things through until the 4th of July, one supposes. It was characteristic of the family that, having nothing to do all day, he left Shreveport sometime after 5 a.m. and so arrived here before breakfast.

The two things uppermost in his mind were the aforesaid summer vacation and how much he thought I would enjoy joining him, his wife and youngsters for day long outings in the forest where the children could frolic in the streams and, although he did 't say so, we spent our time slapping mosquitoes. The other thing on his mind was Mormonism. He said he appreciated the time I had given his two fellow Mormons last Sunday who reported back to him that they had had a fine time. Obviously he wanted to talk Mormonism and I was glad to listen. One thing is certain, the cult has done a great deal for him by way of stabilizing his career and that in itself is enough to make one admire its potentials. When asked about the possibility of me going into the matter for my own sake I put forward a delaying tactic. He seemed amazed that I should ever have heard of the Mormons and I thought he was going to pass out with amazement, too, when I mentioned Palmyra, New York and my acquaintance with that neck of the woods where Mormonism really had its inception. I really felt that he felt astonished about the whole thing and perhaps just a little disappointed that he had found in me somebody who could ask him questions about the subject which, until then, he had supposed nobody had ever heard about save himself. I am so glad he has such a faith in the thing for he will find lots of support in it over the years, I do believe.

And so last night was Fugabou's wake and at 111 this morning was his funeral, the weather so fair and so many people attending the funeral. So turneth the weekend and I hold the thought it was equally fair in Lyme.....

15508

Monday, May 20th, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair in the 50 - 70 range. Last night and this morning the thermometer established a record for chilliness for any May 20th. I hope Dame Nature doesn't try to break all the different types of records during a single year by pushing up the thermometer in a month or so to establish a heat record or a drought. Up to the present moment, the rainfall for 1968 is a little over 40 inches. The annual rainfall is around 55 inches. One assumes the next 7 months of the year will not equal the first 5 months. Eighty inches of rain really would set things afloat.

James dropped in about 11:15 this morning, remaining for dinner and lingering on until after 2. He brought a bucket of ice cream which he said should probably be hustled into the icebox forthwith since it had been long off the ice than was good for it. He had made the purchase at the Broadmore shopping center, intending to jump into his car and head down this way without delay. But just as he stepped from the store into the street, he encountered a familiar figure in the person of I. S. Willard. The conversation was rather more extended than he wished but finally he extricated himself and jumped into his car after having explained the reason for him being in a "slow hurry". But just as he stepped on the starter, the same I. S. Willard came racing up to the car, explaining that she wanted to tell him just a little bit about the problem she was having in getting some kind of a print properly framed and so time marched on and the ice cream tended to lose its firmness.

There was a long rigamarole about an invitation by I. S. Willard to a party on Saturday afternoon at Clotilde and Lester Huges' home. I. S. Willard had called Clotilde to ask if she might bring Kay at 5 o'clock. Four o'clock was another magical hour in which an invitation to the same party had been issued, this time by Sudie Lawton. The resulting mix-up was extensive but not disastrous although the net result was that nobody among the trio seemed happy about it. What a time the girls can have in scrambling their social undertakings.



15509

15509

J. H. spent the better part of the 20th in Shreveport. I saw him at supper, however, and he seemed gay enough. It seems that Mr. Doge of the Pecan Experiment station near Shreveport dropped dead Sunday evening and the funeral was held today. He dined with us a couple of weeks ago and seemed in fine health which just goes to show appearance isn't everything.

And speaking of such matters, I was surprised on Sunday noon that Miss Hunter attended Fugabou's funeral for she seldom attends a funeral. I was even more surprised to learn today that her daughter who lives in Alexandria whom she always referred to as Pat, died on Sunday noon. She had been ill for some time. She, that is, Pat, was a lady I never did see. Most of Miss Hunter's friends seldom if ever saw her although she did get up to Melrose once in a long time. I suppose her funeral may be next Sunday as one or another of her grown children live in California. Like the other children of Miss Hunter, this daughter was said to have had none of the gifts that makes la Hunter such an unusual person. It is said that one of Pat's children, nobody seems to know if it was a grandson or granddaughter of Miss Hunter, show some signs of artistic inclination in oil painting but I have never seen any of the creations from that quarter.

After leaving here this afternoon, James probably topped at the artist's house and perhaps he will have some report to make on la Hunter's loss. It is said that the latter might journey to Alexandria to attend the funeral and if so, that will be remarkable since la Hunter never travels very far from home base.

I got down to see the pigeon and the chicken this afternoon, --down the road a few cabins away. When I arrived there were a few chickens in the yard but I saw no pigeons. Within a matter of minutes, however, the mama pigeon came winging her way to alight near where I chanced to be standing. At the moment she approached, her foster chicken, now bigger than she, came running out from under the house and nearly upset its mama by trying to push himself under her wing. It seems that the pigeon's foster child never roams with the other chickens but invariably scoots under the house when his mama takes to the air, coming out only after she returns from a swingaround in the ether. Strange doings in the bassecour.....

15510

15510

Tuesday, May 21st, 1968.

Memorandum: The thermometer gets up to 60 to 80 and fair but not until the vegetables and cotton grow with gusto.

This morning at 9 o'clock coffee, Celeste mentioned having come into the house about 3 yesterday afternoon and turning on the TV for no especial reason. A program was just ending, one out of Alexandria in which Mrs. Eakin was discussing "Twelve Years a Slave" and one of the ladies present turned the book so the camera caught the cover very plainly. It seems odd the volume should be traveling the air waves but not negotiating the mails as yet. Celeste said that Wellan's, one of the Alexandria department stores, was mentioned as having the book on sale. If patience combines with longevity, we may yet succeed in laying hands on the book.

This noon I caught a news cast and found mild merriment in one item, --thos famous Shepherds of folly fame made the news again, the report stating that indeed, "Les Folles" like everything else in France, had closed. That is really news. Verily, it is a different France, you might say even a different world, what with "Les Folles" interrupting their famous presentations. One can conceive of a world without the present President of France but never a world without "Les Folles".

And speaking of radio news, I heard David Brinkley this evening giving a report



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about the President of France squandering his time and energy on going abroad to dabble in the affairs of other nations when he would have done much better to concentrate on repairing matters at home. I suppose before he had finished his five minute report, plenty of people had rushed to their writing desks to point out the error he had made and he certainly had made one. What he said was that about the time the student strikes were starting in France where educational matters had long deserved improvement, the French President had flown off to Hungary and stir up the Hungarians even as he had tried fishing in troubled Canadian waters a while back. Now everybody knows and most of all, perhaps Mr. Brinkley knew that it was not to Hungary and the Hungarians to whom the President had gone but to Rumania and the Rumanians. And yet there is was and no correction made at the conclusion of the discourse, going to prove that even the best qualified speaker on a particular subject and inadvertently say something which he certainly had no intention of saying.

Irvy Hott or however he spells his name was down for supper tonight. There was so much talk about this year's failure of the pecan crop that I never did get an opportunity to chat with him about town doings. He is chairman of this year's Christmas Festival and I had in mind to delve into some of the ideas which the grapevine mentions as being developed. Among other things, he and one or another of his committees plan to have some news man of one of the major net works, both radio and TV, be down here for the first Saturday in December to broadcast the turning on of the lights. The idea is understandable enough if the town wants more visitors for the month of December but the multitudes already converging on the town just about tax the capacity for entertaining such crowds to the breaking point. When a community of fifteen or twenty thousand finds itself inundated by some fifty or sixty thousand visitors, it may be easily enough seen that feeding and housing such a crowd presents problems difficult to solve. Accordingly the beating of drums to attract even greater crowds become a matter that gives one pause to figure out what is going to be done to handle the overflow.

And now I must attend to a dab of mail and call it a day. May the weather be pretty and pleasantly warm in Lyme.....

15512

Wednesday, May 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair, --65 to '85, with a brisk breeze that made it seem cooler than it really was.

It's odd the way vegetables have been re-acting differently to our excess of moisture during the past couple of weeks. The tomato plants, for example, have been growing tall much too fast while the bell peppers give the impression of shriveling down, fortunately not quite to the vanishing point. The beets, on the other hand, have gone straight ahead, apparently unimpaired of excess moisture and I'm gathering some tomorrow morning for tables on both sides of the fence. The "misere" about the tomato plants is that when they put all their energy on growing tall, they don't take time out to put blossoms on the lower levels but insist on tossing their bouquets out at the top so that when the fruit develops, much of it will be up high and little down low whereas, of course, one would like to see the distribution more even from top to bottom.

I heard another reference to "Les Folies" on a Paris broadcast today. It is so hard to imagine Paris without "les Folies" that I tell myself I ought to do a column speculating on this lamentable phenomenon.

Today was Dee Hertzog's birthday and a party for nine ladies was given across the fence for the ladies. If conversation ran thin, they may have indulged in a dab of gossip for more than one lady of late has mentioned marital difficulties in the home of one of Cousin Arthur's daughter. Cousin Arthur has three children, all girls, two of whom are married; the third still in school. Both of the elder daughters married doctors, one a Boston physician, the other a Crescent City practitioner of the same. I guess both couples married while they were rather sweet girl graduate in development and their respective husbands were just starting out in their profession. It is said that when Cousin Arthur made a gesture to supply some



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cash to the Boston couple, the young husband put his foot down firmly, saying that he and his wife were going to get along on what he made even though their income might be modest for a while at least. When the New Orleans couple were offered a handout, however, they accepted. Now they have two or three children and things are going along alright but a rift is in the offing because the New Orleans husband, --Dr. Bienvenu, doesn't want to hear anybody in the family mention the money that has been advanced and it appears his wife is making more frequent visits up this way and complaining about her husband's disagreeableness whenever any reference is made to money advanced from Cousin Arthur's ample coffers. A night or two ago, Mrs. Charles Cook, wife of the Parish Coroner, chanced to be in the bar at the Country Club along with several other customers including Cousin Arthur and his wife. Supposedly because she may have had one or two extra snorts, la Cook demanded in a loud voice of Cousin Arthur as to the cause of the scuffling going on in the Bienvenue family which certainly was none of la Cook's business. Retreat seemed the better part of valor in this instance so far as Cousin Arthur and his wife were concerned and they abruptly retired from the club for the evening. It was all a tempest in a teapot, of course, but somehow just made for a conversation piece when the local girls assemble for a little teaparty of their own.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned last night to read some excerpts from the W. Cash volume, "The Southern Mind" or some such title. I have heard of Cash who died some years ago. I believe the book appeared in 1941 and, if memory serves, it set heads wobbling in Charleston, S. C. I must inquire more about Mr. Cash. She also read some more from the Painter opus on Proust, bringing the record up to about 1916 when the final form of the gigantic work of more than a million words took its final form.

Tonight there's some kind of a doings at St. Mathew's school, a graduation or some kind of exercises and tomorrow night the white schools in town will be awarding diplomas to the High School graduates. Northwestern has its graduation a week hence on the 30th which will close this semestre and summer school will not open until June 5th. I must ask Natalie if she is going to teach at summer school. Last year she had mentioned Greece as a probability for this summer but what with the weddings in the family and all, I assume Greece has gone out the window....

15514

Thursday, May 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 69 - 88 brackets with a 30 mile breeze out of the southwest making the temperature just right.

I got some gardening done before sunup and had already splashed through a bath and put on some fresh regiment before breakfast. About 8:30 there came the sound of a big buzz from the living room. On investigating, I discovered bees were swarming in the upper part of the big old chimney serving the living room and some of them were coming down into the room. The sheets of tin covering both chimney pieces would seemingly be heavy enough to discourage anything from penetrating them but I reckon the queen bee must have found an opening where the tin and bricks were loose and so had entered, followed by all her retainers. For some reason known only to themselves the bees descending the chimney and coming out into the room from the fireplace were determined to concentrate on one single screendoor, --the one giving on to the back gallery. Not a bee was to be found elsewhere either on doors or windows. It was odd that one could not push them from the screendoor itself although I tried to persuade them to move around the frame of the door and so sail on out of doors but go they would not. And so, since I had people coming I went to work on them as best I could in the shortest time possible. When the battle was over, it sounded like most military reports in that one contending force escape with slight damage while the other side lost heavily. As for myself, I could count only two stings, one on the first knuckle of the middle finger of my left hand, the other in the same place on the little finger. I swept up five dustpans full of the enemy but having no official estimator as the Army does, I calculated by guess which was about 6 or 7 hundred bodies. If one gets bored with nothing to do, I am glad to recommend a bee fight which is bound to provide no end of exercise while it lasts.

Carmen 'phoned this morning to give an account of the



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New York Bill Larsons. June Larson has flown down from Manhattan to Atlanta where she has a sister living. Together the two of them are driving to Natchitoches today or tomorrow, hoping to pause here momentarily and thence go on to Houston after visiting Bill's mother, Mrs. Maubry Jones, in Natchitoches. From Houston the girls will drive to Shreveport where June will take a plane to Manhattan which she must be on Monday. She reminded Carmen with whom she talked out of Georgia on the 'phone to be sure to remind her to pick up another Heritage disc since the one La Jones had sent her is just about worn out from playing over and over again, probably to draw attention to their friends to the Clementine Hunter references, the Larsons having a large Hunter collection.

Bill could not get away as he is currently playing the lead in some theatrical piece in New York, Carmen being unable to recall the name of the play but she thought the title had something about a girl in it. Should this play be on little Miss Lee's list, I think it would make Bill very happy if little Miss Lee should go back stage and talk Hunter a bit with him. I never chanced to ask if little Miss Lee likes visiting a theatrical dressing room between acts or after them and whatever her inclination or lack of same might be is quite understandable.

Like everybody else, Carmen is complaining about the poor local 'phone service and the laggardiness of the mails. She tried dialing me four times today and each time got a recording station that the number is not a working one. On the first try, she got through. I suppose most people, especially those not knowing the peculiarities of the local mal-functioning of the system, simply give up trying when confronted by the recording.

In the postal section, all classes seem mighty skimpy to us for this week. The things La Breazeale of Baton Rouge mailed me last Saturday for Miss Hunter haven't put in an appearance and a letter, posted to me in Dallas on Saturday, hasn't come to hand as yet. I had a call Sunday night from the writer of the letter who wanted to correct an order, sent to me although intended for the artist. Only Life came through on schedule and I am impatient to read the article therein about Andre Malraux. I find it odd that some mail travels so fast generally and how slowly it comes through on others.....

15516

Friday, May 24th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 80's until sundown when there was much thundering and a dab of rain, cooling the air into the 70's.

It was just grand finding Wednesday's letter from Lyme in today's post.

It goes without saying, of course, that I felt vast concern about the matter troubling little Miss Lee's peace of mind of late. At the same time, on reaching the end of the letter, I felt a great surge of gratitude to God that final reports are so reassuring. Let's all join hands in holding the thought that that hump is well past and that brighter, more peaceful days stretch ahead, but definitely on the high road to normalcy. How dreary must have been those days of uncertainty and how bright those that followed when good tidings finally came through. So often I think of that dreadful experience of a few years ago when records got mixed up and the wrong one assigned to little Miss Lee. That such unforgettable experience should ever have had to happen seems so lamentable and I shall be trying to persuade myself in the future that there may be no more of such unhappy experiences for my Lady of the Lamp.

Needless to say, I was entranced that the reproduction of the Christin or Kristin Nelson design was already familiar to you. What a remarkable coincidence that this second acquaintance with it should have come from such an unexpected quarter. Up to the present moment, I haven't established clearly in my mind whether the person in question should be address as Miss or Mister. Off hand, the first name sounds definitely on the masculine side but the phraseology of the letter itself suggests the person to be a soul of delicacy. I have written Mr. or Miss Kristin Nelson regarding the presence of Hunter items already in the Edward G. Robinson collection on the theory



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that, if advised of a Hunter in the Nelson shop,  
he might be interested in looking at same.

My day turned out rather differently than planned in  
that I had not expected people and ended up by having plenty.  
James dropped in about 1 o'clock and remained for two or three  
hours. Half an hour after his departure, John Wenk  
appeared and a little later his mother blew in. After  
supper, John asked if we might take a walk together in  
the Ghana garden. It seems he flew down from Boston to Houston  
on Wednesday to attend some kind of a Moon Project con-  
vention and then took a plane for Shreveport. This noon he and  
his mother started down here but John said that he got out of  
the car at the first stop light, as Sister and her son  
don't hit it off very well. He thumbed a ride and got here before  
she did. As John is flying back to Boston on Sunday,  
I assume he will return to Shreveport tomorrow but what his  
mother's plans may be, I have no idea.

At close of day, I yearned for a nice hot bath and divested  
my clothing and stepped into the tub when a great  
racket on the front gallery impelled me to crawl out and don  
my raiment and respond. It was Sister. She didn't want to bother m  
but just wanted to ask me if I would call her in the morning between  
5 and 6.

A couple of telephone calls followed and I did not  
get to knocking off a column until quite late and did not  
finish until 1:30. Often I like to have our nightly chat  
before attacking desk work but tonight I reversed the order and  
feel greatly relaxed in the knowledge, I hope, that there  
may be no further visitations before another dawning.

It is said that thus far about 80 teachers at Northwestern  
have not had their contracts renewed for next year and that it  
is expected that there will be many more to will be  
turned out to make room for political appointments  
who will better reflect the political views of the new President  
than the scholastic climate of the former one. I shall be  
interested to hear what Natalie has to say about all this. In  
view of her husband's position on the bench, she  
is undoubtedly quite secure in her post.

And now I must fold up the beard, grateful to God and  
little Miss Lee for the tenor of today's post.....

15518

Sunday, May 26th, 19

Memorandum:

Cloudy, damp and continued warm. Last  
evening there was an electrical storm that lasted prett  
through the night but only an inch and 2 tenths of water  
tered in the gauge. Today was cloudy but it appears  
less so tonight.

The nicest thing about the weekend was Saturday's  
post from Lyle together with the enclosure about  
the Cambodian visit. I remember the pictures from  
life recording that event and somehow the memory of  
them makes the present tempest in a teapot seem so much  
closer.

Little Miss Lee was quite right in feeling that Le  
would understand perfectly regarding 447. I am  
so glad the matter will be filed away for possible  
reference at some future time for I have a feeling every  
might find many delights if and when a contact  
should ever be established whether in midtown or Connec  
The Shreveport contingent headed toward home  
after Saturday's dinner. I know not if they traveled  
together after reaching the first traffic light. Sister  
threatens to honor us with another visit "real soon".

James 'phoned me this morning, something  
quite rare, I must say. It was easily  
understandable, however, as the guests at the Perrault  
house, were being entertained at dinner there and James  
was not dreaming of participating in a festival  
for Mr. Cotton and his wife and the secretary. I  
believe they were to leave later today for Washington,  
D. C., where they are to set up headquarters and not  
as reported in the State of Washington as their hostess  
had understood. I assume Sudie graced the dinner  
table, but I shall not have a list of those invited  
until sometime later.

James reported that a letter from Briarwood expres-  
sed disappointment about the Long girl that she and he  
sister, Virginia, had adopted 40 or 50 years ago. It  
seems the aforesaid Long has been living, lo! these  
many years in California. Carrie was thunderstruck the



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when suddenly as out of no where, the former adopted daughter turned up quite unannounced, indicating she was going to linger for a long visit. Carrie cut the length down to about a week, declaring she had never dreamed how dull a person could be until encountering her one time ward. The ward spoke of intending to buy a place somewhere in the Briarwood neighborhood but as she has no money, it doesn't seem likely that she will do that and apparently she has one on her way.

This afternoon I answered the 'phone to hear a lady's voice asked me if I recognized it. I said I did not. How is it people never get over playing that old game of "Guess Who?" to make a long story endless, it was the lady doctor saying she had a couple nuns with her for the day, up from Lafayette and they wanted to come down here and to go on to Magnolia. And so they came. Desirée was also with them and some young person whose last name was York but what with both Desirée and the York person seeming much alike and dress similarly in what appeared to be boys clothing, I never did find out if York was a boy or a girl and it didn't matter. The lady doctor asked me if I found the Christmas cheer she had left on my doorstep last December. I had not and had never heard of it until today. She is recently back from a visit to her parents in New Bedford, Mass., and threatens to come down shortly and tell me all about her adventures.

She mentioned today's Hatchitoches paper even as James done when he called this morning. They both had seen the picture of Lestan and his reading machine on the Yucca gallery as taken by an amateur photographer in the person of Ray King who had written the article. Lestan's newspaper will not reach here by mail before tomorrow or Tuesday and will go forward promptly. James said he will pick up a copy in town and deliver it later. I thought little Miss Lee might like to have an extra copy and it will go into the mail, the second copy, as soon as James makes a round.

About midnight I awakened and watched for a long time the constant flashing of the lightening, two or three flashes every second and lasting the hour or two I remained awake. I didn't realize until today that the electric current had been cut off from about midnight, coming back on this morning about 7:30. So much for a quiet weekend and I hold the thought it was equally peaceful in Lyme....

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15520

Monday, May 27th, 1968. 27th, 196

Memorandum: Another inch of rain last night, the thermometer running from 60 to 80 around the clock. It remained cloudy all day but the stars do occasionally shine through a thin curtain of gauze.

I found a laugh or two in the Sunday Hatchitoches Times which goes forward in the same mail as this memo. The story about the Reading Machine made the back page. In spite of the fact that at the time the photograph was made, the photographer failed to put in an appearance and so the writer of the piece who had never taken a picture, tried his hand at it and apparently came through with flying colors. Neither he nor I, however, had taken into account what the newspaper might do with the film and that's what made me laugh when I saw it. I possibly explained at the time that I had laid out a setting, calculated to tell the story about the Reading Machine service by propping up a container holding records so the cover with black background and white lettering, would show on the packaged records looked when prepared for traveling from the library to the customer. On the opposite side of the bench on which I was sitting and balanced off the container on the opposite end of the bench was another container so opened as to show the records within and on the pavement at my feet, another container resting on the bricks as to make possible an easy reading of the notations on the cover. But alas for the best laid plans of mice and men, the make up department of the newspaper sliced off all the containers, leaving nothing but a dolt fiddling with the machine on which the records are played. I know not why but somehow it seemed to me the effect might have been the same if someone had taken that painting by David, in the Metropolitan, cutting off the Athenian youths and leaving only the philosopher with his cup of hemlock.

Today's post brought a letter from Kristin Nelson expressing satisfaction with the Hunter recently forwarded to Los Angeles and pondering on the possibility of acquiring 7 or 8 more. I shall be glad if little Miss Lee can settle the question in my mind as to whether I should address letters in the Nelson direction as to Miss or Mister. I am not enclosing the letter since my secretary today wasn't worth much and I shall have to run through the epistle again before answering it.



12230

15521

Carmen told me today that Thelma and John returned home from Illinois Sunday and left this morning for Houma, La., with a view to settling somethings down there. I must get a letter off to them by the next mail, admonishing them to keep one eye open for water hyacinths plants while in the marsh country. For several years they have scooped up such plants down there and brought them to me. There used to be tons of them in the bayous in this area but a war of extermination against them, carried on by the Wildlife and Fisheries or Conservation Departments has eradicated them from this area and my gold fish in the big sugar cauldrons are crying for the roots of the hyacinths which they thrive on.

I heard a couple stories from the clerk today giving side-lights on the ways of Sister's two sons. One of the tales had to do with Lloyd's visit down here a week or two ago. He cannot support himself and family in the manner to which he had become accustomed although he has a good job and accordingly he asked -- and it is believed, -- received a cash handout and a set of four new automobile tires. As for John who is receiving about a thousand dollars a month from his job on the Moon program, told his mother he needed a new pair of pants and asked if he could charge same to her. He might. And so he did just that but not one pair but three. And so, as between J. H. and the handout to Lloyd and Sister's largesse in pants to John, the Wenk boys did pretty well for the on their respective visitations.

Mrs. Walker called tonight to ask about something in a column manuscript. She is planning to go somewhere for a couple of weeks around the middle of June, -- Florida, perhaps, or New York. I suppose if it be to Florida it will concern the teaching job she is hoping to land there. I intended saying some time back that the last time I spoke with Natalie, I asked her about a person of 50 being unable to get a job in Louisiana. She told that that after 50 a teacher cannot hope to collect a retirement compensation but that a person can take job if he accepts the fact that there will be no retirement pay at the conclusion of his contract. So things turn as the new week gets under way. There were no bees today so I take it they have given up the battle as a bad job.....

12231

15522

Tuesday, May 28th, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair on the 55 - 80 side with a 12 mile an hour breeze to help the sunshine dry the still dampened earth. Mrs. Walker called me last night to read the article from Paris, appearing in last week's New Yorker. It was an excellent article on a tiresome subject about the scuffling going on there.

At one point in the reading there was a digression to read a couple of paragraphs from Esther. She and Helen are now in Westbrook. Recently they were driving up Connecticut way with the master of the Rockefeller Church carillon when their car slammed into one that had stopped just ahead of them. The impact must have been considerable for Esther's head, fortunately cushioned by a hat she was wearing cracked the windshield. She has had a flock of X-rays and only one more to undergo and the doctor up to this point says she is alright.

Another paragraph from the letter I found particularly interesting, having to do with Miss Hickok, the friend of Mrs. Roosevelt whom the latter called Tommy, if memory serves. Esther wrote that Miss Hickok had mercifully died recently. I believe she was in a hospital up Poughkeepsie way. Esther said that Mrs. Roosevelt, perhaps ill-advisedly, had persuaded Miss Hickok, on the AP, I believe, in the early days of the F. D. R. regime, to give up her newspaper work and join her in some of her enterprises. Esther mentioned some of the books Miss Hickok had written. I recognized the name of one or two but have already forgotten them again.

Esther said that Miss Hickok has been suffering from diabetes and that one leg had had to be amputated, after which she was faced with the necessity of having the other leg taken off because of the gangrene caused by the diabetic condition and therefore it was a blessing that she did not have to face that ordeal and whatever the aftermath might have been.

Esther said that a while back Miss Hickok had come to them bringing with her letters Mrs. Roosevelt had written.



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Mrs. Roosevelt wrote quite unguardedly to her personal acquaintances and Miss Hickok was among her closer friends. And so she brought them, --the letters, -- with her when she came to Esther's and Helens, consigning them one by one to their fire. In years to come, there will other personal letters to Mrs. Roosevelt's friends which were not consigned to the flames and all of these, no doubt will become eagerly sought after alike by historians and collectors.

The Ghana garden looked so pretty at dawning, the rows and the parterres so trim and freshly washed in dew. I gathered a basket of nice crisp vegetables for the big house and one for across the fence. The latter basket, however, was packed in vain, as I discovered later, for J. H. and Celeste left early this morning for New Orleans. I understand they plan to return tomorrow night.

Carmen called me this morning, having forgotten to tell me yesterday about the visit of Edith Porter of Shreveport to Natchitoches. While in town Edith stayed with Elizabeth Traber. --Edith, Carmen and Elizabeth somehow all being kin. Edith inclines toward the panicky and is a considerable fuss pot. Elizabeth had some business to attend to on Saturday morning and offered to drive Edith over to spend the morning with Carmen. Edith declined to ride because she preferred to walk. On crossing the street, she failed to step up at the curb and sprawled in the gravel, skinning her knee and shinbone. A college student chanced to be passing in his car, gathered her up and delivered her to Carmen. After Edith had caught her breath, decided she was going to fill her cigarette lighter which she did, letting much of the liquid run over down her hand, the liquid igniting when she flicked the flint, burning her hand, especially between her fingers, whereupon Carmen cranked up her car and took her to the lady doctor who bandaged the hand and got the gravel out of her knee and bandaged it. --Not exactly a satisfactory exercise so far as Edith was concerned, I guess.

I have an appointment with the peachen on the morrow. I must consult with her about her intentions toward maternity. She is stalling about finishing up her job laying this year's batch of eggs and is manifesting scant interest in putting the finishing touches on her improvised nest. I do hope she doesn't turn out as trifling as Louella in that matter.....

15524

Wednesday, May 29th, 1968.

Memorandum: 55 to 85 and withal fair. Tomorrow, of course, comes a holiday for the postal boys. I believe the bank boys get one, too, but that's about all there is to it. It is said the stores in town will be open and when I asked Carmen today if she expected to go to her Red Cross office on the morrow, she said that she indeed intended doing so and asked if I had understood her to say yesterday that she was going to Shreveport, a trip she did not plan to make until Saturday. I said that in view of the national holiday on the morrow, I assumed the Red Cross might be observing. She quite seriously asked, "What holiday....."

"Oh, I had forgotten about the 30th of May. We shall probably observe the Confederate Memorial day the early part of next week."

"Holidays in Dixie" is a title to be used in a Plantation Memo some time or other. That ought to set some readers sizzling.

I never did get the results of the Oregon Primary last night, awakening between hours but never catching the news on the hour. Tonight's news casts suggested that Mr. Kennedy expressed himself as disappointed but all the other candidates seemed happy about their respective results. I chanced to hear two commentators tonight hazard the guess and the results of the National Conventions would be to have a Humphry versus Nixon campaign. Something tells me none of my favorite possibilities for the office will get the nomination. I should prefer Humphry to Nixon as President if those are the two who will be running.

As I listened to the various political discussions on the A can scene tonight, I recalled that remark de Gaulle made in 1946 when he resigned the French Presidency:

"Who can hope to run a country that makes 264 kinds of cheese....."



155251

15525

Wednesday, May 30th, 1968.

The artist's son, Frenchy, returned to San Francisco yesterday. None of my friends here thought his visit much of a success so far as the public image he created. He arrived on Friday even the artist was at her gate to receive him but to one or two people present, the greeting each had for the other was what might be described as "restrained". They hadn't seen each other in a dozen years or so and one might have expected them to embrace but they didn't. He spent the balance of the afternoon sitting in her front yard, constantly holding a pint, now and then renewed, holding the bottle under one arm and pouring a drink now and then into a glass held in the hands of the opposite arm, offering nobody a drink although some of his older friends passed that way to say Howdy. He is much taller than his Hunter and two or three teen agers have innocently referred to him as the artist's brother.

I had been expected he would take his place beside his mother at the funeral in Alexandria but he sat in the pew behind her at first, then moved to another one further back and just as the services began he left the church and didn't return until the services were over.

The artist had expected her prize grandson, Ug-more, to drive her from here to Alexandria for the noon service on Sunday, but Ug-more heard there was some kind of a picnic or fish-fry scheduled at Hot Wells, three quarters of the way between here and Alexandria and so he flew off in the car his grandma had given him and left her to get somebody else, --Olite, to serve as chauffeur.

On Sunday afternoon when everybody returned from Alexandria French, instead of remaining with his mama, went on to Hatchitoo to spend Sunday night with some of his wife's kinfolk in town and had intended to head out for California the next morning but remembered on Monday morning he had left his things at the artist's house and so he had somebody pick them up for him and so headed westward Tuesday morning, a grand time, apparently having been had by nobody.

The folks across the fence came home from New Orleans sometime during the afternoon for I saw J. H. at supper. He, who never speaks of prices, remarked that the Monteleon had gone up on its charges, -- twenty dollars for a room, a dollar for a coke and so on. Possibly I shall hear the lady's impression of New Orleans prices on the morrow at coffee time.....

155251

15526

Friday, May 30th, 1968.

Memorandum

Fair until 5 this afternoon when it turned cloudy. Humidity in the 80's and so is the temperature. There is no breeze and the weather man says there is a 20 percent chance for rain.

Lloyd Wenk appeared before breakfast bringing me three big books on Mormonism which I may keep for a month to read. Where I shall find a reader is something else again.

Carmen called this morning to read me a paragraph from Jill Jackson's column to the Times Picayune from Los Angeles. She said she had mentioned it to James whom she had chanced to meet in the street this morning. It stated that a group of people from New Orleans had flown to Century City which seems to be in the Los Angeles area, to be present at the opening of a film about oil in Alaska. You have already guessed it for, indeed among those making the flight was none other than Carolyn Ramsey who was mentioned as writer and editor of the film which, in turn, was produced by the Pan-American Film Company or some such of New Orleans. I suppose Carmen will probably send me a clipping and James may well bring me one and, it goes without saying, I shall pass them along.

How that lady does get about. This evening the static was so bad I could understand little of the radio news. I heard enough, however, to gether that "Tall Charlie" had refused to resign. From the way he and his opposition frame up the picture, one would think the electorate were given to understand that they had but two choices, --de Gaulle, ism or Communism. Off hand it would seem to be there must be other choices. It seems to me either group represents undesirable totalitarianism. "Tall Charlies" brand being bad for the world, the Communists bad for France and the world to boot. Somehow it all sounds so much like politicians are forever cooking up, pushing the electorate into a position where he finds himself between "the Devil and the deep blue sea".

At long last, I finally got the gourd garden planted today. I think it high time under average Spring weather but this year's ..... "that of the" and it stung at the



15527

brand of rain and cold made late planting inevitable.

I was forced to take an hour out this afternoon to receive the man from Wellington, Texas, who clogs the mail with letters about his brand of Episcopalianism. His pet hero is Billy James Harjis whose cause he enthusiastically about just as he does about his pet Presidential hopeful, Mr. Wallace. He mentioned sending five hundred dollars the other day and considerably more to his Episcopalian buddies. In spite of that, he does have some interesting things to relate such as his trip to the Holy Land a few weeks ago with a Harjis group. He also related some interesting particulars about the Inka or Inca civilization. He says he does get down to Ecuador and Peru occasionally and always flies up to the two ancient Inca capitals. It seems they are both North of Lima and much higher. I don't know what the Lima altitude may be but I understood him to say the Inca capitals or the ruins thereof are about ten thousand feet above sea level. He says that the one which Pizarro captured and destroyed is about a hundred and fifty miles from the other capitol which the Spaniards never did reach and which was unearthed only in the early 1900's by former Senator Bingham of Connecticut. Somehow I had always understood both of these ancient places were much nearer Lima than he reports them to be. Perhaps Rudolph can throw some light on all this after his visit down that way in August.

And speaking of South America reminds me to say that I just learned today that the little Helms girl who took pictures down here last year is being married in Hatchitoches on Saturday. The groom is a native of Ecuador and his parents and a party are flying up for the wedding. I find it odd that to me Peru doesn't seem so very far away but Ecuador seems as remote as another planet.

I must knock off a note to thank Mrs. Rigdon for her kind letter which I am enclosing. Everybody seemed to like Louella but I must say I had completely forgotten about the peacock who died and then came back to life. Perhaps I never read that one as is the case with so many which leaves me quite in the dark as to how they turned out. I must say that on being reminded of the episode, I remember so clearly not only my surprise in his return to life but even more the profound impression he made on me when he was dead and how strange were his great long legs sticking straight out as stiff as poker. It is for people like Mrs. Rigdon that one wishes some of these pieces might be made available in book form.

Except for the absence of the postman today, I heard nothing reminding me that it was a holiday. The local schools were all functioning and tonight is graduation at Northwestern and, to quote Th. Ima, "that is that".....

15528

Friday, May 31st, 1968.

Memorandum:

70 - 90 with the skies fair and the humidity high.

I shall not post this memo on the morrow but rather hold it to go forward on Monday with Sunday's note.

The Post Office on the morrow will be operated by the merchant-planter because the clerk will not be here and it is the clerk, now Post Master, who handles mail with more facility than J. H.

This noon the clerk had a phone call from Port Arthur, Texas, 20 or 30 miles west of Lake Charles, La., advising him that his brother was suffering from a heart attack and likely to die at any moment. The clerk accordingly dropped everything and rushed over there. His brother died about 4 in the afternoon. The funeral will be there on Sunday and the clerk will be back on the job Monday.

Tomorrow, being the first of June, will be a busy day at the Post Office, what with so many Old Age Pension checks always arriving on the 1st of the month. I do have to mail manuscripts for the papers but that is the only piece of mail I am going to send out because of the confusion that will be obtaining in the Post Office.

It's curious how frequently it happens that two or three people will manifest interest in a subject and call me all on the same day about one point or another that has appeared in the column. This morning there was a case in point when within an hour I received three calls from people in different parts of the parish, each one asking for particulars about the house mentioned in "Shadow and Substance" or whatever the piece was called, having to do with Madame Achille Prudhomme of the old plantation sometimes called Cashmere, sometimes Oaklawn. One of the callers, oddly enough, lives on Cherokee plantation, adjoining Oaklawn who wanted to be sure that Oaklawn was indeed



15529

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15529

the property next door to her. Although a resident of the neighborhood for years, she was still in the dark about the identity of Oaklawn as opposed to Oaklawn and wanted to be set straight about it.

I got a surprise in the Ghana garden this morning which gave me quite a turn. When the garden was ploughed some weeks back the clerk told me some chemical fertilizer had just arrived and so I scattered an ample amount during the ploughing so it would be well worked into the soil to perk up what would be planted later. Unbeknown to me earlier this week, the clerk advised August to put some more chemicals where the bell peppers were growing. August told him he was afraid it might be too strong for the plants but the clerk told him to go ahead and use it as it wouldn't do any harm. Of course August should have consulted me before going ahead but he didn't and so this morning I discovered that the peppers, just beginning to bear, and all folded up I don't know if I can raise a new batch before it gets too hot for the young plants but I shall try.

Mrs. Walkerr mentioned the other evening that she is going on a vacation about the middle of June. She didn't say where although I politely inquired about her agenda. I learned today that she is heading out for Florida to look at living quarters there but as to which part of the State, I have no idea but I assume that the majority of the schools are in the Northern part of the State and assume that must be the locality where her potential teaching job may be.

I got off natal day greetings to James who celebrated his birthday today. I should not have been surprised if he had passed this way but he didn't and as I never 'phone the house, fearing I shall awaken Kay, I don't know what their plans may be have been. I made the most of the comparative quiet at this bend of the river by knocking off a column about "Goldie Hunter", a member of the Clementine Hunter household and shall be glad to have an extra column ahead against Walker vacation absences.

So turns this final day of May and I hold the thought it has been as pretty a day in Lyme as locally.....

15530

15530

Sunday, June 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy to partly cloudy, 80-ish in temperature and humidity with only traces of sprinkles night and morning.

With the clerk not being here Saturday, I was glad I held back the outgoing post, what with the merry-go-round in progress in both store and Post Office. When I passed by the Post Office to pick up the incoming mail, I noticed one of the overseers trying to sort the outgoing stuff and gave the impression of being quite lost. Saturday is a big day in any country store, I guess, but it was busier than usual yesterday since the customers seemed plentiful enough but little chance of purchasing anything and those who persisted weren't long in discovering nobody knew where anything was or what the prices might be.

As for myself, I had a quiet day until about 8 o'clock in the evening. I had called it a day, taken a bath, donned some light pants and had just settled down to a bit of news gathering while attacking a bowl of ice cream when pilgrims appeared at my door. I could have batted them for coming at such an hour.

There were three of them, two gentlemen and one lady. I think one of the gentlemen might have been Clay Watson or whatever might be the name of that little man who rigged up Fort Jessup for the State. The other gentleman was huge. Both gentlemen were clad in shoes and swimming shorts and that was all. The young lady with them said something about Patty Segelou which was no great recommendation. That visitor was strikingly clad in a light gown that came almost to her ankles and seemed to me in the nature of a nightgown. She wore nothing on her feet and accordingly found some of the sharper grasses a bit trying. About first dark I got back to the ice cream but by then the ice part was something else again.

Today I had the good fortune to be quite alone save for an occasional Ethiopian friend dropping in to say Howdy.

The neighbors across the fence decided to attend

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08321

15531

08321, June 3rd, 1968

the funeral of the clerk's brother in Port Arthur. Lull  
Hankins drove them. Some luncheon was left for me on  
the glider on the gallery across the way. I picked it  
up about 8 this morning. Tonight about 7:30 they called  
me to say they were back and it was time for supper or would be  
quarter of an hour. They reported a very pleasant trip and as  
they are accustomed to making greater strides when taking to the  
big road, today's little jaunt of 500 miles or so must have  
seemed like nothing. It seems that the funeral was about 2:30  
a service, rather, after which the burial took place some  
half a hundred miles further west which they, of course, attended.  
I guess the man had been stricken on Friday morning  
and everyone was grateful to Red Cross for having succeeded  
in whisking the man's son in the Army in Germany back to  
Port Arthur within 24 hours, enabling him to be there for the  
services.

This afternoon I chanced to be sitting in the  
rather bigger armchair just in the corner behind  
my desk chair when the phone rang. It was I. S. Willard  
Mrs. Walker just called. She reported having gone to Hodges  
Gardens with her mother today, having lunch at the motel  
and going on to the gardens and over the residence on  
the island where an exhibition of paintings was being held.  
I asked how Clara enjoyed the island and she said it was alright  
except that their stay had been too prolonged because the  
ferryboat got stuck somewhere en route from the mainland to  
the island while they were still on the island and that they  
had to wait more than an hour after viewing the exhibition before  
they could embark again.

I had hoped to get a good deal of reading done last night and  
today but never did get finished with other odds and ends.

There is so much static these nights that I get little  
out of the radio during the present present atmospheric condition.  
I had hoped to hear the Kennedy-McCarthy discussion but  
couldn't ever find it although I fell sure it must  
have been on radio as well as TV.

And so the weekend begins and may it be as little Miss  
Lee would have it at Lyme.....

08321

15532

Monday, June 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair, humid in the 70-90 range.

When at the Post Office this morning, Dr. Franck  
who has the camp between the garage and Fugabou's house,  
came into the store to ask if anyone had a camera. He  
wanted to take a picture of a 74 pound turtle he had  
just caught on a line he had set for catfish. I  
don't recall how size and weight combine in a turtle  
but I suppose it depends on the type of same. Probably  
a hard shell one weighs more than a soft shell but that  
is only a guess. It seems to me I have seen 150 pound turtle  
of the hard shell variety that were fairly large and so I  
suppose a 74 pound one wouldn't be anything extraordinary  
but even so, I should imagine trying to land a 74 pound one on  
a line might represent quite a trick.

Perhaps I would do well to borrow some catfish lines and  
set them in the tomato patch to see what luck I might  
have, not in catching turtles but hooking bluejays. This  
morning I picked a half dozen shells of green tomatoes,  
all about the size of teacups, each of which, --the  
tomatoes -- not the teacups, which had been  
hollowed out by those trifling jays. About this season  
one must declare war on the jays who seem to have a perfect  
mania for green tomatoes. As there are merely hundreds  
of tomatoes and thousands of jays, one is bound to wheel  
out the heavy artillery if dividends are to be realized  
in the vegetable section.

And while still in the garden, I might remark upon  
one peculiarity this year in the okra section.  
This year the rows of red okra seem to be doing famously  
while adjoining rows of green okra are much further  
behind although both types of seeds were planted at the  
same time. Naturally I am wondering if the red  
is going to prove more hardy than the green I. S. Willard  
that the plants from the seeds of the red okra which  
I sent her to try are growing at a great rate. I  
gather her plants are half a foot taller than mine and she  
is already beginning to inquire about gathering the fruit  
although none has appeared on her stalks as yet.

I am sorry to report that the peaken isn't looking



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very pert these past few days. She tends to sit down on the ground every few minutes, remaining there for half an hour at a time without moving. I haven't seen her manifest any interest in food either. At first I attributed such doings to the state of her pregnancy but since she is not laying I am wondering if she might have decided to have the pip. Tomorrow I shall examine her a bit with Doreatha standing by so that Doreatha may remove the scale from the bird's tongue if it turns out that pip is the problem.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned tonight at 9 to report she was a little under the weather and so could not take up one or two points about some copy I had sent her Saturday regarding col. She mentioned the current hurricane and said she was glad it had passed Fort Myer.

The current inclination of youngsters to get married

before finishing their schooling was exemplified again tonight in the case of a daughter of "Sonny-Boy" Deblieux who is a cousin or something or other of L. S. Willard. "Sonny-Boy" isn't so youthful as his name suggests, being a man in his 60's, I suppose. Anyhow, his daughter is still in school and the youth to whom she became engaged has two years more in college. An elaborate wedding was planned for Wednesday night of this week with soads of invitations out for a big church nuptials. Yesterday "Sonny-Boy" had a heart attack while in the barber shop and was rushed off to the hospital. It was doubted that he would live very long and so Wednesday's nuptials were moved up to tonight and held not in the big town church but rather in the hospital chapel even though the father could not attend, and of course only a handful of people were invited to the chapel out of the scores invited for the church ceremony. Thus children rush into things in response to impulse and, one assumes as in other cases, diplomas and off spring are conferred on the same day a few months hence.

The grandiflora are so pretty now, appearing to especial vantage in the stunning white natal vase.....

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Tues. 4/4  
Monday, June 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, humid and 70 to 90.

Early this morning I rounded up a dab of gardening with a view to getting ahead of the sun which I did, hoping to spend a couple of hours indoors on a column while the full heat of the day spent itself but I didn't do much on the inside job, what with too many interruptions. Tonight I shall have a go at a desk job which didn't get to first base during the day.

James dropped in at 11, remaining for dinner. It was all very pleasant but after he left at 3, when I took up the work started on the typewriter, there were so many interruptions that it was supper time before I had given an opportunity to take a pass at my desk.

Among the interesting points coming to hand about Mr. Cotton who recently spent a weekend at the Perrault house, it seems he, his wife and secretary, have been lingering on in Shreveport for a week or so, "saving the country" --mostly for himself, as near as I can see. The Cotton party planned to go to Washington, D. C. this past weekend and so, during the week prior to his departure, Kay and Sudie drove up to Shreveport to pay their respects and, one is inclined to wonder, possibly did a little bit of business.

It seems this gentleman, so concerned with the welfare of his country, is advising everybody that silver is the thing to buy and claims he has already persuaded various people to let him supervise deposits in silver to the amount of over 18 million in Swiss banks. And because he is flying off to Switzerland this week to attend to patriotic business there. One cannot help wondering if he is very kindly persuading one particular lady of our acquaintance to let him buy silver for the Swiss cause and where all that will end up, nobody knows, but since Swiss accounts are sacrosanct, one wonders if most of the silver, if, indeed, not all will be in his own ultra-patriotic pocket.

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There was a 'phone call from the Louisiana Heritage this afternoon, reporting that advertising folders covering the disc, "A Visit to Melrose", had just come off the press and asking me if I cared to have some. I would. I assume they will be coming to hand within a day or two and I shall send samples along.

While on the wire, I asked what they thought about my suggestion of some time back regarding the impending new Quarterly and they reported my letter had not reached them which seems odd. Perhaps it arrived but was thought to be a form letter and chunked into the trash basket without being read. In that letter I had suggested that in making up the illustrations for the Quarterly, they print some of the pictures in full page without margins so that the same plates, removed from the Quarterly text, could later be used for a book made up exclusively of illustrations, which could be sold as a item when bound together by themselves. This should enable the Heritage to put out a volume of pictures at a very nominal price since the illustrations and the plates used in the Quarterly, would already have been charged off against the Quarterly. That the picture book would constitute mere nothingness so far as the investment would be concerned. Heritage seemed entranced with the idea and asked me to say the whole thing over again while notes were being made as I rattled it off. How the thing will be worked out, I cannot imagine but it will be interesting to see what eventually comes of it.

I found a happy solution to two problems while James was here. I have a sufficiently busy schedule this week that I preferred not to entertain Kay for an afternoon as she had proposed on the 'phone the other day, suggesting that she would like to come down on Wednesday afternoon while at the same time asking me to have dinner and inspect her Perrault mansion. I told James that instead of coming in for dinner, I would drop in for luncheon on Thursday, figuring that that would knock out the Wednesday visit and at the same time avoid having someone bringing me home at night, had the dinner date gone through. He called later and said the Thursday luncheon, chez Perrault, would be just fine and thus the program for the next couple of days will be the smoother. And so things turn and so I must get busy and knock off a column.....

15536

Wednesday, June June 5th,

Memorandum:

Fair, humid and 72 to 92.

Great was my delight this morning to receive a letter from Lyme which, just by its mere presence, gave me a feeling of gratitude and great re-assurance.

The absence of any reference to one's good health gave me addition confidence, based on the axiom that "no news is good news", thus bringing with that omission a feeling of greater happiness than I have known in days.

And may I say how much I appreciate the thoughtfulness in little Miss Lee's kindness in setting me straight about Miss Nelson. Even as do others, I suppose, so do I tend to arrange the salutation in my letters to "Dear Kristip Nelson". Naturally I am delighted I don't have to employ that somewhat cumbersome phraseology in future letters.

Because of the profound impression momentous events make on us, we are inclined to remember the circumstances under which we have happened to be experiencing at the moment the news reaches us. So it was, for example, in the case of the news of the murder of John F. Kennedy. So it will be for me as to the circumstances under which I learned of the shooting of his brother, Bobby.

I had remained at my desk last night until a quarter past 12, just missing the midnight news I told myself on going to sleep that I would awaken within a couple of hours on the hour and get whatever I had missed earlier in the evening. Awaken I did and vaguely heard the usual recital of events of scant interest and just as I reached toward the radio, I realized an excited voice over the air waves was saying that Senator Kennedy had been shot. Needless to say, I suddenly found myself wide awake and kept my ear glued on the same station, --K M O X, St. Louis, for the balance of the hours of darkness.

Skipping the horrors of the whole business I must touch



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on one point that almost had its humor in a vaguely Tragedy-com sort of way. Only a few days ago, one of my secretaries asked me might have a picture from a magazine, --the likeness of Roosevelt Grear, pointing out at the time the request was made big, black Mr. Grear was about the biggest, heaviest athlete in football or whatever it is in which he excels. And there the broadcast from Los Angeles came the news item that Mr. "Rosey" Grear had captured the little assailant of the Senator and, in order to keep the culprit from getting away, had sat on him. That there was anything other than a grease spot I seems phenomenal.

Further along toward daylight came a report that Mrs. Jack Kennedy received news of the attack on her brother-in-law in a truly "Robin Hood's barn" sort of way, --her sister, Princess Radziwille having 'phoned her from London to New York, advising her what was going on in Los Angeles.

I have just had to jump up and close the doors and windows giving on the north gallery, what with a fine electrical storm with a might winds heading down on us with such force as to carry the rain horizontally across the gallery and into the house. We didn't need the rain but the cooling of the air will be just grand for sleeping.

Just as I was turning this page, an electric belt somewhere knocked out the electricity which enables me to proceed in the dark and at the same time receive striking vignettes from where I sit, glancing as I do in the direction of the sun dial in the middle of the white garden, unusually white tonight as the frequent lightening flashes in a twinkling convert the white ribbon grass, now 8' or 10 feet high around the sun dial into vivid ghostly array, standing out sharply against the green of the bamboo hedge in the background. Just a flash but that is enough to give the scene a wonderful effect.

I had hoped to keep abreast with the condition of Robert Kennedy tonight via radio but with the electric current knocked out, I shall have to catch up with events in Los Angeles sometime later during the night, assuming the current is restored. From what the noon bulletins had to say, he has suffered brain damage and, if so, perhaps it would be a blessing if his career should be terminated now, what with the possibility that if he survives, his sight, reason and even ability to move might be greatly effected. What contradictory forces are at work in this point in History when we like to call ourselves civilized while murdering our better minds.....

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Thursday, June 6th, 1966.

Memorandum

Sunny to partly cloudy with little showers all around but not quite touching this turn in the road, thermometer a little above 90.

The nicest thing of the day was the surprise letter from Lyle, --smile, --Lyme, hard on the heels of yesterday's note.

I read it at 10 this morning and only regret that another secretary did not appear this evening to provide me the pleasure of enjoying it again.

I am so sorry to learn that little Miss Lee had to go through all the preparations of getting ready to receive two friends, only to have the heavens open and drop down five inches of rain that knocked out the visitor completely from realizing the rendezvous. I am filled with admiration for the seemingly casual way in which little Miss Lee accepted the disappointment, taking it all in her stride although, having gone through the same mill myself on occasion, I can well appreciate the disappointment, the more so because of all the care expended on the preparations which never came off.

I am especially grateful for the enclosure carrying the titles of the books on negroes for this very morning I wanted to jot down some titles that I proposed to recommend to a publisher who had asked my opinion on such matters and most particularly what I thought of the possibility that books of this nature, in view of the rising space accorded topics on racial matters, since, in view of the success of the Pulitzer Prize winner, seemed to stimulate an ever increasing demand for books on people of color. To have such an exhibit as offered by this page from the New York Times gave just the desired authenticity to the point I, myself, had offered gratuitously.

In response to the observations, speculations and inquiries regarding Mesdames Ramsey and Word, I gather I somehow must have omitted mentioning something about their former connections with Hodges Gardens. Before his death,



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Mr. Hodges, a rather tight-tipped man, mentioned to me that he had found lacking a degree of dependability in la Word and at about the same time, that lady was dropped from the Hodges staff and, one assumes, the dropping of la Word automatically meant the dropping of la Ramsey. Be that as it may, there were no further issues of the Magazine and although somebody else was appointed to handle publicity, there were no further publications of this type of thing for Hodges. Of course I never heard anything about any of this from either lady since I was not honored by either personal or written communications. Of late I have been wondering if there has been a break between la Word and la Ramsey but this is based on nothing but vague conjectures. I don't know why I did not inquire about that when Carolyn 'phoned me from New Orleans last Christmas but I didn't.

Our electricity last night remained off from several hours and so, when I folded up, I left my radio turned on so I might catch some news when the current was re-established. Thus it happened, remarkably enough that almost in a repeat performance of the night before, I awakened to find myself encountering more news about Robert Kennedy, an interruption breaking in on a health report to say that he had just expired. I remained awake a long time in spite of my sleepiness for I wanted to hear all I could, knowing that today I would find scant chance to listen to anything. Perhaps I may be able to listen to the NEC or CBS program scheduled for tonight.

As planned, I ran in to town at 11:30, going to 406 where Kay, James and I had a pleasant hour and a delicious d.b. of wine, after which in separate cars, the hostess in one, the host and I in the other, drove down to 209 Williams Avenue South to the Perrault house where we inspected the house first before sitting down to a marvelous dinner, prepared by, I believe, and served by Ruth Crabtree, who really did a superb job. After dinner, Kay and James took me for a stroll around the outside of the house, -- the grounds being only an acre but somehow seeming larger, being in town where most houses enjoy less space. I liked everything I saw and Kay said it pleased her as a house for her guests. Most of the furniture is from the Bluff and some of the pieces are very handsome as to quality of design and material.

When I told James it was time for me to depart and he rounded up his station wagon, Mrs. Crabtree came out bearing three big paper sacks, lined with plastic, containing all kinds of good things from rice and shrimp, avocado salad, set kinds of melons and home made cookies. Back home a little before 4, I was able to get some new plantings of beets, radishes mustard into the good earth before darkness began settling down. -- I want to say especially how much I appreciate the part in today's letter concerning little Miss Lee's activities in the business world for knowing of them makes everything else fall into place in my concept of the Lyme layout....

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15540

Friday, June 7th, 1968.

Memorandum: On June 7th, 1968, I received a package from L.S. U. Press. I opened the package to remove the slip and before putting the book back, turned through the illustrations which are of such a character as to be rather difficult to make out in a poor light. When returning the volume to its shipping carton, I tucked in the unbound copy of Mrs. Walker's thesis which may be of interest even though the subject is dull. It is my understanding that the work is considered an excellent study of the topic dealt with and will serve future scholars with a picture of the local educational problem as it exists in the 1960's.

When this machine was recently given an overhauling, one of the little pryz points on the machine at the point where the letters hit the paper was removed and not replaced. It was by means of that little gadget that I determined margins and without it, I seem to have made ducks and drakes of margins which, among other, must distress little Miss Denholme considerably. Fortunately I don't have occasion to make many stickers for packages which is a job quite baffling under existing circumstances. I am going to have the typewriter man do something about this the next time he makes a round. In the mean time, I hold the thought it isn't too worrisome to these receiving letters from this address.

A wave of sniffles and coughs has arrived from out of nowhere and lots of people are complaining about feeling stuffy in the head and groggy in the throat but few are put out of commission by the malady. I called I. S. Willard this afternoon and when the call was answered, I realized somebody was taking the call for her. I was surprised when told that the voice I heard was that of I. S. Willard, afflicted by a cold. Naturally I cut off the conversation quickly but nevertheless I had difficulty in persuading myself that it was indeed the lady in person. All this week there have been so many electrical carryings-on in this area that the



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Resulting static has made radio reception almost impossible. I have accordingly missed much about the Robert Kennedy matter which I should have liked to keep up with but I am grateful for having been able to catch much of the early morning news casts. I am holding the thought that there may be less interference tomorrow afternoon during the Washington and Arlington services. I was impressed this evening to hear that a line 18 or 20 blocks long, eight people wide, moved slowly for hours pass through St. Patrick's to pay respects to the Senator from New York. In view of the heat, it is no wonder so many people fainted along the way.

And now there is talk about Edward Kennedy being named as Vice Presidential candidate. Unquestionably the name alone would pull many a vote for the Democratic ticket but one may readily understand, should Ted Kennedy bow himself out on the present go-round.

A call just came through from Mrs. Walker. She reports she is going to investigate one or two places regarding a teaching job, departing this next weekend on a journey of exploration which will take her to Florida and Tennessee. She remarked that she hoped to settle a choice of college and find a suitable habitation for the ensuing year, returning to Natchitoches to take care of packing the furniture in the two apartments she and her mother are occupying at present and shipping the stuff to their new abode where ever that turns out to be. It sounds like a busy time just ahead but she seems to have the energy to manage it and that is half the chore. The depressing thing about it from my point of view is my instinctive feeling that she isn't likely to find any situation in which she is going to be any better adjusted than her present location and therefore will probably be going through the same sort of tearing up and moving about with every summer immediately ahead. With her mother in her 80's and my frail and the fact that both girls are constantly getting on each other's nerves, the prospect just ahead strikes me as lacking in resiliency.

I wish I might pass along a basket of fresh vegetables to Lyme tomorrow morning when they are all a-drip with dew and looking so pretty. Little eggplants are forming and hold the pr of much imperial purple to round out the spectrum of light and dark greens, reds, yellows and so on as the vegetable baskets develop at this season.....

15542

..intermittent, cloudy and breezy Sunday, June 9th, 1968.

Memorandum: of some observations and feelings  
Fair with humidity at 85 and temperature  
running from 74 to 95. It was so nice finding Thursday's letter from  
Lyme in Saturday's post how springy of little Miss  
Lee to wedge in a note in spite of the fact that an ogre  
during business hours might be prowling about.

In view of rapid transmission of the mails,  
I was able to turn from the references in the letter to  
the tragedy in Los Angeles and time in on the funeral  
services which made the whole episode from murder to  
the grave so neatly tied together.

I had been having coffee in the morning on Saturday  
while the TV across the fence was presenting the activities  
around and within St. Patrick's. The afternoon was  
too cluttered up with people to enable radio listening but  
perhaps I did not lose too much from what was available  
over the air waves since the two or three times I sampled  
what was going on in the ether, the major stations I  
tried were primarily local and none of those I tried were  
reporting the progress of the funeral train. Happily I  
discovered an ABC station out of Alexandria that was  
broadcasting from Washington prior to the arrival  
of the train there and I stayed with the station until  
to conclusion of the services at Arlington, that is  
to say from 6 until 11 o'clock local time. Among  
other fine things that may be said about the Kennedys, it  
must be agreed that they know how to engineer  
things of this magnitude just perfectly. I suppose there have  
ever been few if any semi-public agents that  
have been handled so perfectly. The merchant-  
planter observed that Bobbie's papa assumed the costs of  
the occasion although he did not say where he got the  
information. The cost for transportation  
alone must have been considerable.  
Before the train reached Washington, the broadcasters  
mentioned a shower which, I hope, cooled the air but  
I was especially glad to hear later that the moon was out by th



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time, the cortege reached the Lincoln Memorial..

It seemed coincidental that news of the capture in London of the slayer of Martin Luther King should have come through while the Kennedy services were going on at St. Patrick's. I noticed one radioreference to the King murder when the radio announced contact with the Ray brother somewhere in Illinois who stated that his brother who broke out of jail during the past year apparently had ample funds, gathered from where he knew not. I am wondering if it is really possible that this gunman is indeed killer, --interruption, --did I say a hired killer. If so, it will be interesting to learn who did the hiring although the identity of such a person or group may never be known, I suppose, since it is said people have paid out money for such a deed to a gang without ever knowing whom they direct to do the deed. At least everybody may be thankful that this particular culprit is no longer at large. Of course he is insane but even so it does seem odd he could have been so stupid as to have not one but two forged passports upon his person along with a loaded revolver when flying around Europe.

James phoned this afternoon about 3:30. He said Kay and Mrs. Crabtree had asked if they might pay me a visit this afternoon. They might -- if they could get ahead of some 5 o'clock pilgrims. I had made up the latter but knew if I didn't, I might expect the Perrault girls to pull in any old time, especially at the supper hour. And so they arrived about 4:30 and we had a nice little chat after I had emptied the baskets of things they brought by way of goodies including strawberries, melons and even a great big watermelon, not to mention fresh homemade butter, whole wheat bread, buttermilk, much lettuce, avocado and dressing, sour cream, celery, cucumbers and a dozen other items I haven't even looked into.

Kay wanted Mrs. Crabtree to walk in the Ghana Garden where they found a lot of vegetables they thought they would like if I had some in ample supply, --including, of all things, lettuce, fresher but no better than they had brought.

One reason for their visit was to ask if I would care to come at least once a week at Perrault house, either coming for luncheon around noon or for dinner around 7. If for luncheon, James or Kay would always be happy to bring me home if I wished to get back before night. In case of dinner, I might just as well plan to spend the night in town since there are plenty of rooms at the Perrault place.

As for the rest of the weekend, it was quiet enough and I am grateful for the aforesaid; quiet since I suppose next weekend will see Wenks and even more Wenks as the 4th of July holiday approaches.....

15544

Monday, June 10th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, humid and 74 to 95.

Carmen called me this morning to ask if anyone had called my attention to a paragraph in Saturday's Shreveport Journal. For several months that paper on its front page has been running a "Questions and Answers" column on all sorts of topics, planting, household suggestions, where this or that may be obtained, etc., etc. In the Saturday issue there was one paragraph asking if Clementine Hunter and Francois Mignon still lived at Melrose and some reference to a fire at that place some time back. The inquiry was signed "O. W. G." which somehow suggests a scramble of the initials of Ora Garland Williams.

The answer to the question stated that both parties mentioned still lived there and, mentioning by name, reported further that neither the African House or Yucca had been damaged by the fire which had destroyed the kitchen of the main house. It was stated further that Francois Mignon continued living at the main house and added that the plantation was open to the public only at Pilgrimage time. Carmen will be sending me the clipping shortly and I shall pass it along.

I called O. W. G. asking if she had seen the paragraph. She had not. We recalled she had written an article for the Baton Rouge paper a couple of years back and we wondered if the writer of the "Questions and Answers" column had used the information in that piece to formulate the answer before making up the question. Off hand, it would seem doubtful if a person knowing the place well enough to mention the names of the buildings would not know about the whereabouts of little Miss Hunter and all. It seems a little odd that the kitchen of the main house should have been mentioned as it was and then, too, it seems remarkable that the final sentence should have been added, pointing out the place is open only at Pilgrimage time, a point that may have been stressed in the original article by O. W. G.

O. W. G. had guests at the time my call went through and so I cut the contact short. She said she would be calling me back. I had not realized until this evening that she was teaching at summer school this session.



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Handwritten: Mrs. Walker called to say she is meeting her brother-in-law and his wife in Nashville this weekend and that together they will go to south Florida to look over the educational possibilities down that way. Why they should meet in Nashville, I cannot imagine but perhaps there are prospects there, too. How Plantation Memo will be handled, I do not know but I assume much as usual.

This morning across the fence while we were at our "demi-tasse cups" to quote a pecon grower passing this way the other day, "over our demi-tasse cups" this morning mine hostess had much to relate about the uproar on Saturday night at about the time the Kennedy funeral was approaching its conclusion, the merchant-planter had a frantic call from Shreveport. It seems his sister was on zee wire, drunk as a Lord and insisting that her brother count sister's daughter-in-law in Shreveport who was being mean to Sister, etc., etc., etc., until the whole house was in a jangle. Since Sister did not appear here this past week, one wonders if she will be making a prolonged visit this coming weekend when her son, Lloyd, with his wife and children are planning to come to stay at the camp for a couple of weeks. Something tells me this is likely to be just the time when Sister will probably put in an appearance and see to it that things at the camp are set at such a pitch that tumult may reign throughout the vacation period. It is silly to cross bridges before coming to them but it is a natural enough to anticipate storm warning by straws in the wind. With what anticipation in the past have I looked forward to Labor Day when, once finished, everybody gets some sort of an accustomed way of life without piling up on one's doorstep.

The most interesting bit of news out of London is the report of Mr. Ray's landlady who testified today that Mr. Ray, on quitting his lodging, forgot to take with him the needle by which drugs are administered. I find myself wondering there is any question about extradition of Ray from Great Britain since he entered the country as he did quite unlawfully. I should think that fact alone would suffice to cause his expulsion without any legal rigamarole at all.

Well, so things turn and I find myself curious to discover if this week's Life on the morrow or the issue a week hence will carry the Kennedy funeral which I hope they do in color....

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Tuesday, June 11th, 1968.

Memorandum: Even though summer will not arrive for another 10 or 11 days according to the calendar, it is doing a pretty good job imitating in advance what it is scheduled to be a couple of weeks hence, fair, humid in the 74-93 degree range.

Carmen called at 2 this afternoon to ask if she might pick up the canvases her Baton Rouge sister-in-law had sent to the artist in care of me. I told her 4:30 would be just fine. She asked me which I thought Clementine would like best as a present, wine or ice cream. She said it is so hot she thought ice cream would be better than wine for her. I told her that since she was asking me what I thought of a Hunter preference, I would say wine without any hesitation.

"Well, yes, I can understand that," she started to argue and so I let her play that one out. As Carmen invariably likes a bit of a snort when she drops in to see me and since she was bringing with her her sister and latter's husband, both of whom are supposed to be ailing, I asked her advice about what refreshments I might serve that would please them the most.

"Oh, they will drink nothing but cokes but I should enjoy wine," she explained.

"Well," I responded, "if it should chance that the artist should be calling on me when you arrive, I'll serve cokes to your sister and her husband and since as you just observed, ice cream is better for the artist than wine, I might serve her ice cream and pour wine for you and that ought to make everybody happy -- except the artist."

And so the afternoon ran on and the artist whom I had not expected, did not put in an appearance while the Breazeales whom I had expected at 4:30 did not arrive until five o'clock, having had some kind of battery trouble, and the upshot of the thing was that nothing at all was served since Carmen couldn't pause here long enough for a drink since the ice cream she was bringing to Clementine was melting in the car in which the two people accompanying Carmen were sweltering. I don't blame Carmen for trying to kill three birds with one stone.



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auto ride but at 75 she is old enough to know she cannot engineer her relatives to keep up with the timetable she rigs up for her own use.

Life magazine usually arrives on Tuesday but it did not put in an appearance today. I am wondering if publication date was held up to get in last Saturday's funeral pictures. Even if it had been, it seems almost impossible it could have run the thing through the presses and have it on its way by Monday. I shall be curious to see how much of the funeral, if any, gets into this week's issue. I am hoping that the funeral things may be extensive and that the publishers held the cathedrals' scenes especially for a later issue.

I have inquired from one person and another as to the people who were invited to the funeral, wondering, for example, if Claire Booth Luce or any of the Roosevelts were present. I think the Roosevelts and the Kennedys did not hit off too well and so I should not be surprised if none of them were. As a political figure and even more important, as a publisher, it would seem as though Madame Luce might have been found among the ribbons or "within the ribbons" or how the phrase runs.

I think it was David Brinkley who remarked that it was astonishing that in view of the shortness of time for the making of preparations, nobody who should have been remembered was forgotten in the list of people invited to the Cathedral.

As time marches on, I have no doubt we shall hear a great deal more about the eulogy Ted Kennedy delivered in speaking of his brother Robert. I was thrilled to hear it and I shall be interested to learn eventually by whom it was composed. In view of all the rigors of the days preceding the funeral, it would seem a physical impossibility for Ted Kennedy to have found either time or the energy to compose such a wonderful document. So many people have mentioned its excellence, I have no doubt it will be re-printed in many publications and sooner or later some particulars as to how it was composed and when written will be mentioned.

And now I must knock off a few letters and then look for a nice cool avocado salad which I trust is waiting for attention at this close of day.....

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Wednesday, June 12th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Lots of weather today, starting off warm and humid, - 85 degrees in temperature and humidity by 7:30 this morning, the heat and dampness increasing until noon, - 1 o'clock, - when we had 3 tenths of an inch of rain which seemed little wetter than the humidity before the shower but the thermometer did go down which was a help and the electricity went off for a couple of hours which was no help at all.

Right after the rain, the sun came out and the afternoon was a dazzling dish of soggy. Came supper and another cloud blew in to cool things off without any rain although some moisture must have been dumped somewhere fairly close since the coolness made that fact obvious. Then the electricity went off again which is another way of saying no water since the electric pump had no juice, and no radio, reading machine, lights, fan and one did not dare open the ice box to drain off whatever cool there was within it. Fortunately, however, the current was restored about 8 o'clock and naturally I jumped right into the tub to accomplish an over-due cleaning-up job before R. E. A. changed its mind again. I shall try to get caught up on news at 11 o'clock out of Denver until static rules out aerial reception. And that is a tiresome sketch of today's weather.

Life magazine arrived in today's post, only one day late and I assume from the brief glance at it in uncertain light that no attempt was made to include Saturday's funeral. I gather that the front page may well have been planned prior to Robert Kennedy's death early Wednesday morning. I must say I was surprised when the double, fold-out page of the cover turned out to be something other than an extension of the picture on the front cover itself. I shall be holding the thought that next week's issue will "do" the funeral with generous pictorial coverage. I gather from what I heard on radio about it and what other people have had to say the funeral itself must be classed as the grandest thing of its type ever engineered on the American scene and certainly deserves lots of space pictorially.



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The note from Robina arrived in today's post, too, and naturally I was impressed by what she had to say in reference to Kennedys. That she should concede they have the right to live must represent a surprising concession on the part of the majority of life-time readers falling under the influence of the press in the Dallas - Shreveport axis.

In a secret vegetable garden where I always plant a few things which may thrive unmolested by marauders in the Ghana garden, I plucked a dozen pretty bell peppers this morning for stuffing, thus filling in the vacant spaces where the run-of-the-mill peppers were over-fertilized. Thanks to the cooling off of the weather, I made the most of the opportunity that pleasant phenomenon made inviting by transplanting some other tiny bell pepper plants, the seed of which I had put in the ground when the bigger plants folded up through outside tinkering.

As of the moment, it would appear there will be bell peppers a plenty and perhaps there will be some tomatoes, too, although the chemical fertilizer, applied too lavishly at the same time the peppers were fiddled with, are too rank in vines at the expense of the fruit which would be more plentiful right now, were the vines not running away with growth instead of concentrating of fruit.

Mrs. Walker called tonight to read me a few pages from the volume on Proust. I think we shall finish it before she heads out on her Florida jaunt in search of a house there for this impending autumn and winter. I can think of nobody to whom I would recommend the book in spite of its wealth of particulars. I think one would have to know quite a lot about "A la Recherche" if the study were to be comprehensible in the first place and probably one would have to be more or less acquainted with the characters in the biography if one were to avoid getting bogged down in just a lot of meaningless names. It's for Proust what St. Simon was for the 17th century, that is to say, something one must read if one wants to get very far in the subject but, at the same time, it must presuppose the reader's acquaintance with so many people and especially the author's twisted observations every now and then so that it turns out to be some that cannot be "put in all mains".

I find myself hungry and I think I shall invest a pound cake of my acquaintance and some fresh strawberries to be added to some Borden's strawberry ice cream, all which ought to add much to present bulges and at the same time provide much pleasure to "the inner man".....

15550

Thursday, June 13th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the mid 70's to 90's.

Without seeming to rush the season too much, I guess one might say summer has indeed arrived. And I am not thinking of thermometer readings but merely the ebb and flow but mostly the ebb of people. In fact my entire morning, afternoon and evening were taken up with visitors and here I find myself at the close of day without having accomplished any of the several things I had had in mind to do.

At the 9 o'clock coffee hour, mine hostess asked me if I would receive Mrs. James Livingston of Hatchetoches with some of her friends from Lafayette. I said that my morning was already reserved but that I would be glad to take them on at 2 o'clock. She contacted them in town and they agreed to come to see her at 10, do some business with the artist at 11:30, go to Beaufort for luncheon and then, as Celeste was to be in town, would return here to see me. And so that is how that part of the day turned out.

I didn't hear anything interesting by way of news but the Livingston - Lafayette people did relate some rigamarole about Beth Cloutier "renting" Beaufort to some movie people to use in some kind of a picture, "not the inside, just the outside", --whatever that entails. Naturally I said nothing about Station WDSU inquiring about Melrose for a Hunter Gouette.

Another evidence that summer is upon us came at quarter to 8 when, thinking the day about done, I started to make a round to see about the aviary when I bumped into a youth and maiden in front of the African House. They both were wearing something on their feet, swimming shorts about their hips and that was about all. The youth was one of the Shreveport Petersons who have a camp across the river and the maiden seemed to be a kinsman. We had a pleasant chat but not a tour and with a perfectly straight face when they said Goodbye, I asked them most particularly not to tell the Petersons they had been here since it might put tour ideas in Peterson minds and that was to be discouraged and they laughed and that was it.

And now for some sliced bananas and cream and a hunk of pound cake and that will be it for tonight.....



:SUBJECTS)

Water in the mid 70's to 80's.

[illegible]

Another evidence that summer is upon us comes at quarter to 8 when, thinking the day about done, I started to make a round to see about the duty when I bumped into a youth and maiden in front of the African House. They both were wearing something on their feet, swimming shorts and their legs and that was about all. The youth was one of the Khazepet veterans who have a camp across the river and the maiden seemed to be a Khazepet. We had a pleasant chat but not a tour and with apparently a twinge too when they said goodbye. I asked them what particularly interested them but they said they had been here since it might be four years in Persian lands and that was it.

15551

Friday, June 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, humid and 90.

I believe it was in last Sunday's Hatchitoches Times that some space was given in the society column to a fine dinner given by a Mrs. Whitehead. Her husband used to be manager of the Hatchitoch Motor Company but committed suicide a few years ago, leaving his widow and two sons with a comfortable income if the real estate were properly managed. One son is a doctor, the other a lawyer and the latter is in the office of Cousin Arthur Watson. Mrs. Whitehead often presents a problem because she hits the bottle too vigorously.

One day last week she invited several people, including Cousin Arthur and wife among others, to her home for dinner. As things turned out, it must have been especially distressing to her lawyer son. When the first people began arriving for dinner, the table was set for six. The time all the guests had arrived, they numbered 25. Obviously Mrs. Whitehead had kept on issuing invitations, scarcely knowing she had already exceeded her household's capacity for entertaining some many people comfortably but, lucky girl, she herself was so far gone that she didn't seem to sense to realize she had no table space for so many and not even enough food for six. Gradually it began dawning on the guests that nobody was going to get anywhere and eventually they bowed themselves out, making everybody feel shame-faced except the host who was too high to sense was was going on.

It must have been a source of considerable merriment to many of those who had been bidden to the dinner to read a full account of the fine gastronomic delights that they had never tasted for Mrs. Whitehead on the day following the dinner that never had come off, had a full account of the proceedings in so far as a successful dinner party might be written up and took it to the Times which published the account in full. I have heard of strange twists in society but I can't recall having ever heard of one just like this particular one.

Mrs. Walker just called to read me the Paris letter of June 2nd in the New Yorker. I was impressed by one bit of information that was quite new to me, a reference to President de Gaulle having con-

..... next winter to carry the migrating birds. If the grandfathers will be expending funds among the old stronger condition. I find myself



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sulted his son-in-law on the situation obtaining at the time of the rioting. I had heard that the de Gaulles had two sons but somehow I had missed ever having heard that they had a daughter.

Before sunup this morning I gathered some pretty stalks of red okra for a bouquet in my elegant white vase and mighty pretty the whole composition looks here on the desk before me.

The tender young turnip leaves looked so pretty that I asked the cook to serve some for dinner. As usually happens, I myself a little behind the others at table and so the clerk, having tasted the turnip greens, asked me if I cared for the mustard greens. I said I should be glad to try some and shortly after I had put the dish down, he asked me to pass him the "mustard" green for a second helping. By then J. H. had joined us and on tasting the greens, asked me if they were collards but before I could say "turnip", the clerk had grabbed the response to state they were mustard and I, of course, said nothing to disillusion anyone. I was, however, happy to congratulate the cook after they had gone the success she had had with her greens.

Mrs. Walker also read me a paragraph from a letter of Esther's just received in which Esther remarked that she must drop me a line to let me know she and Helen had given a dinner party the other evening after which she regaled the guests, --poor guests, --with the playing of the disc, Visit to Melrose, and, as though that weren't enough regaled those present with a recording of Esther's southern drawl when reading the end of the column, she quite direct from the Ethiopian who kicked on the lower section of the screendoor, making it easier for his dog to go in and out of the house the more readily.

Some of the butterfly lilies are gaining a considerable height and all of them are looking sturdy enough, thanks to ample moisture we have been having. Some stalks are 7 or 8 feet tall and I must examine them for buds when I think of it. If memory serves, the first lovely blossom last year unfolded on July 13th and I shall be curious to see on what date the first one comes through this year. They are doing better than the banana plants this year a fact which is easily seen since in front of Yucca both the lilies and bananas are contending with each other for space. A couple of volunteer gourds sprang up right in the midst of the contending parties and the gourd vines are already climbing up through a yellowflowering pomegranate bush and is stretching out tendrils toward the big old magnolia hard by the old iron sugar cauldron. I find myself wondering if the grandiflora will be suspending gourds among its branches next winter to worry the migrating blackbirds.....

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15553

Sunday, June 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair yesterday, fair, humid and hot this morning with an inch of rain at 4 this afternoon which cooled off the air fully.

James, who never passes this way on Saturday, appeared at 11 o'clock and remained for dinner. He had received a call from Valery Clark of the Hatchitoches Seed Store, advising him that Mr. Clark had brought some Japanese water hyacinths from his home to the store for me and so James had picked them up and brought them along with some other types of water lilies for the big iron cauldron all from the Clark collection at his home, prize items he wanted to share with me.

He had found some wonderful peaches somebody from Monroe had brought to Hatchitoches and were selling from a truck in big baskets. He brought one along for the house across the way and was also carrying some kind of a base on casters on which big old potted plants may be moved like a breeze, --something Kay had found and sent along for me. With this item, James also brought an invitation to dine at the Ferrault house on Tuesday noon, --an invitation I accepted although I have already rigged up a pretty tight schedule for week.

Before James left some ladies from Mansura arrived unannounced for a tour and so Saturday afternoon ran along.

Saturday's post brought a copy of the article Mrs. Kakin had written for the first issue of the Heritage publication, October. I ran through it as best I could with an inadequate secretary, noted a few corrections and put it in the post for so she might get it Sunday. It sounded pretty bad to me and I didn't attempt to correct anything except wren dates and wrong people appearing in it although there was much more that should have been corrected.

I lunched with the folks across the fence a little after .....



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11 this morning. Immediately afterward they took off for Shreveport where the national Pecan Growers Association are gathered together for a three day pow-wow. The folks across the way expect to return sometime tonight and headed out again for Shreveport in the morning for further convention meetings.

Natalie called me this morning and we had quite a chat, mostly about college doings. She chanced to mention about the most distressing dinner party she and her husband had attended recently. It turned out to be the same one I had mentioned in Friday's memo but the details were quite different from the account I had heard from Mrs. Whitehead's sister. Marvelous to relate, there had been, contrary to the original report, an ample supply of food but what made the thing an utter "misere" was the fact that the hostess was high when the guests arrived but not sufficiently high to pass out, just wacky enough to be talking all the time and saying such unpleasant things about in-laws who were present, making everybody including the in-laws so shame-faced that nobody could wait until excuses for everyone to pull out which somehow seems much worse in a way than the original account of the doings. One isn't surprised that people at the honkey-tonks have their flying but for a person, passing for a member of high society tries to underline the high part in the middle of the week when her home is filled with civilized people, one is understandable taken aback.

I suppose Mrs. Walker left Key West or where ever this weekend. She called Saturday night but seemed a little uncertain about her plans. Natalie asked me if any arrangements had been made about correcting the column and said that if wished, she would be glad to lend a hand, should a problem arise in that quarter.

I enjoyed today's quiet to the fullest, having many doubts about parallel peacefulness during the ensuing weeks through the 4th of July. I hold the thought it was calm in Lyme.....

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15555

Monday, June 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy, hot and humid.

It was just grand finding Friday's letter from Lyme in today's post together with the clipping about the ominous circumstances in Los Angeles concerning Robert Kennedy.

I am so thankful to learn that there was such an opportunity for little Miss Lee to observe the TV presentation, especially on Saturday covering the entire spread from morning until midnight of all the many facets of the services. I am so glad your comments on the entire proceedings were jotted down as they were. While I heard quite a bit of the progress, I regret I was unable to listen to it all. I am especially indebted for the reference to the absence of flowers until the major items on the program were all finished. It must have made so much more effective the little bouquets or the single flowers they found themselves possessed of, especially at Arlington. I was not at all surprised that little Miss Lee was as impressed as was Leston regarding the Edward Kennedy eulogy of his brother.

In regard to the interruptions experienced by little Miss Lee when trying to write, I can express my sympathy, and especially at the close of this day when I accomplished nothing because of incessant interruptions. It is good that time was found to mention the good news that a final home has been found for the person who has had to wait so long. I find myself wondering, too, how things are panning out for the couple who took his former apartment.

This morning for no reason at all, I arose a little after 4 o'clock, thinking I would do some gardening before the sun really got above the horizon. Monday morning is always a time for dismantling the bed and sending away the laundry. Usually if the weather promises to be fair, I put the wool tack or the mattress or both out on the gallery to air until mid morning before putting the house to rights. I don't know why I did not do so morning but perhaps because it was still dark, I simply put fresh linen on the bed and

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Monday, June 17th, 1968.

generally put things to rights, probably because I was waiting for the dawn. While at breakfast a little after 7, about 20 people appeared out of a clear sky and the merchant-planter was with them. It seems he and Celeste had returned from Shreveport about 11 last night and he had suggested some of the Pecan Growers Association meet in Shreveport, especially the New Mexico contingent, fly down to Hatchitoches early this morning which they had done. Cars were at the air port in Hatchitoches to bring them here to tour the pecan groves but J. H. thought a tour of the houses and gardens would be a good idea. I dropped my cup of hot chocolate I was going to attack in the summer dining room and undertook the tour forthwith.

The balance of the morning for me was a shambles but on other points, --August drunk, etc., etc. By 10:30, the Pecan Growers had flown back to Shreveport, J. H. and Celeste accompanying them for a noon luncheon. J. H. returned here in the middle of the afternoon and then before supper returned to Shreveport.

In the mean time this afternoon, Lloyd Wenk, his wife, four youngsters or is it five, blew in from the camp where they had just arrived. I forgot to mention their haul also accompanying them. That was a tiresome business. And I felt more tired when Lloyd remarked that 3 couple from Shreveport are coming down on Saturday and want to join them in a tour.

Now sooner did I get rid of the Wenks that the store phoned to say that Mrs. Scarborough, wife of one of the overseers had just appeared at the store with some of her neighbors who lives up the river somewhere on the far side of that stream. There were several harum-scarum children in that group, too, a lady or two from Houston and I know not how many. And so there went the balance of the afternoon.

Having achieved nothing all day, I begrudge the time I shall have to spend running in to town on the morrow to break bread with Kay and James even though I realize Mrs. Crabtree will have arranged a fine luncheon and that the outing will do me good. It will not, however, help much in getting stuff done which I am impatient to start stirring.

Today's paper goes forward under separate cover. I understood Natalie to say there is a picture of her future daughter-in-law. And now I must get busy.....

15557

Tuesday, June 18th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Sultry this morning, sunny and humid during mid day and then considerable grumbling amidst the clouds that closed in, followed by an occasional drizzle, persisting thus far, --10:30, tonight.

For everybody's delight, we had the first tomatoes plucked from the vines at supper, --the eating not the plucking at supper. Smile.

I had such a pleasant sensation this morning about 2 o'clock, one, oddly enough, I never remember having had before. I chanced to awaken at that hour, opening my eyes in the complete darkness and noticed a lovely & mellow yellow light of a firefly swinging along just below the ceiling from the corner where the big old iron chest stands, across the brickwork of the chimney just above the portrait of Father and Son and thence onto the picture window. What with all the hosts of fireflies in the gardens, it seems odd one never chanced to find his way into the house before and I found myself enchanted at this visitation.

Somebody from L. S. U. 'phoned this morning to ask if I would see Professor Sue Eakin tomorrow afternoon at 2. I would.

James appeared at 11 just after I had arisen from my seashell. I had done some out of doors work between 5 and 9 when, to my dismay on stepping into my tub, I discovered somebody was "washing the water". I might have drawn on the big sugar pot but waited until water was flowing again.

We journeyed to town immediately, going to 406 Williams for a little chat and a glass of wine, after which we drove over to 209 Williams to continue the conversation until luncheon time at 1:30. The house was pleasantly cool and Mrs. Crabtree had prepared us a fine dab of food, served on a most attractively appointed table. I could see the floral arrangement in the middle of the table in silhouette only as I was facing the sunshine streaming through the triple panes of the bay window but the outlines were enchanting. Cubes of watermelon, wonderfully chilled, started off the meal, followed by marvelous crabmeat on rice, asparagus tips and some kind of vegetables I couldn't identify while a large plate of lettuce out in cubes and deliciously overspread with a faintly bluecheese dressing with some kind of a bread that might claim some kinship to fruitcake, having as it did such a generous assortment of nuts and of small sections of orange sprinkled throughout. Ice tea, of course, went along with this. Then came the dessert which seemed to be kind of a custard resting on slices of baked bananas, some delicious sa over the whole business and topped by a cherry. A demi-tasse



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of excellent coffee followed and that was it.

Conversation was brisk and bounced lightly around the table, touching on nothing of much importance but bubbling over with fun.

We departed at 3 and Kay returned to 406 while James brought me home. We passed through rain in a streak a mile wide between Natchitoches and Bayou Natchez.

Kay is going to journey to Baton Rouge on Thursday to attend a Wallace for President rally. Mr. Wallace addresses a joint session of the Legislature on that day and that is followed by a fund-raising dinner for acceding reports out of New York and Washington over the major networks, Mr. Wallace's campaign is needing more funds. Kay will make the trip with Studie Lawton, the former having ample funds, I suppose, and the latter having none and not letting go of any if she has. I remember that when she went with Kay to Tampa or where ever in Florida a year or two ago, she asked Kay for re-imbusement when she, Studie, decided to purchase a newspaper to read while Kay took a siesta.

The Lloyd Wenks are having a somewhat disjunct vacation at the camp. This afternoon one of the children developed some kind of a rash and so Lloyd put the children and the hound in the car and told his wife to take them back to Shreveport to have a doctor look at the one child and then to return to the camp on Friday or Saturday when they are expecting 3 sets of friends to arrive for the weekend. It all sounds wonderfully dull but if it suits the Wenks it is perfectly alright by me.

I liked the front of the card from Jeanne Livingston, sent with yesterday's memo. I see no point and plenty of mistakes in the clipping enclosed herewith, forward by Neeta Breazeale of Baton Rouge.....

15559

Wednesday, June 19th, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy, humid and 90-ish.

Today I got a lot of things done I should have liked to do yesterday. One result is that I am sleepy and think I shall fold up fairly early for a change.

I was exceedingly delighted this morning when I received a call from L. S. U. on behalf of Mrs. Eakin. Circumstances prevented the keeping of this afternoon's appointment and historical matters were taken up long distance, all of which provided me with more time for other things this afternoon.

The same lady, figuring scandalously in one or another memo earlier this week is back in the news again. This time, however, she was not at home but rather was driving her car within the city limits just south of town on Highway 1. Driving on to the main highway from a place she had been parking at some restaurant or other, she slammed into some out-of-town Cadillac, knocking both the Cadillac and her own Thunderbird or Mustang quite silly.

It must be admitted, however, that Mrs. Whitehead does have luck for the first car to stop was that of Cousin Arthur Watson in whose law office one of Mrs. Whitehead's son practices. Other cars halted and Cousin Arthur directed that the lady, --drunk as a lord, be taken to the hospital for a thorough examination, where it was found she was not much more than in need of a tranquilizer.

As for other details, I shall probably learn about them pretty soon. It was said, however, that Cousin Arthur was just returning to his office from a luncheon at his home south of town and that his luncheon guest was with him, Mat Chopin, an Alexandria resident who chances to be Mrs. Chopin's husband. It is said that Cousin Arthur "looks after" Mat's one



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1968, June 20th, Thursday

third interest in the Chopin million dollar estate and Mat, being somewhat soft in the head, likes to be "battered up" by Cousin Arthur who, in turn, one may be sure, will be properly compensated for the battering job.

I know not how Mrs. Whitehead's sister was informed of the accident but as soon as she learned of it, --a half hour after it had occurred, she rushed over to the hospital where she found Cousin Arthur's wife in the room. Cousin Arthur's wife on catching sight of Mrs. Whitehead's sister, advised the latter not to pause to see her sister since Mrs. Whitehead was undergoing sedation. What a lot of doings an extra snort of whiskey on Mrs. Whitehead's part could set off.

I talked with Clara Genung this morning. She was very happy in having received three post cards from Mrs. Walker, one mailed from Shreveport, one from Little Rock and one from someplace in Tennessee. representing, I suppose, the extent of the daughter's travels as from Sunday night at 8 until she reached Nashville. Mrs. Genung was busy finding good reasons for the proposed move the mother and daughter are to make to Florida or where ever. Mrs. Walker was meeting her Chicago brother-in-law and his wife in Nashville and with them was heading out on the Florida jaunt to Key West to observe educational prospects down yonder. As I believe both mother and daughter are slightly off in this entire move, I can look at it quite dispassionately, wishing them well and wondering how they can be so foolish.

The vegetable baskets looked so pretty in the dawn's early light, they would have delighted Cezanne and little Miss Lee alike, I think. It's remarkable, I find, how harmonious can be so many surprising colors in vegetables, set off by some of their foliage so that they come out so pleasant to the eye, -- the red of the beets, the orange of the carrots, the white of the onions, the pale green of the lettuce, the imperial purple of the eggplants and so on and so forth. I was surprised that even my neighbor who seldom is moved by color, re-upon their beauty. My neighbors are dining in town with the J. H. Williamses and pecan people from Mississippi tonight while I am dreaming of ice cream awaiting my attention in the icebox.....

15561

15561

Thursday, June 20th, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy, humid and 90.

The artist came to see me today, the first time she had made a round in two or three weeks or more. The reason for her visitation, of course, was money. Contrary to her intention to give up painting, she is painting away at a great rate and had brought a couple of canvases I had ordered for La Nelson, only fair in quality but dripping wet with paint.

She didn't have much to offer by way of news but did remark that nobody paid much attention to the 18th date this year. Her explanation, bailed down to a few words, seemed to be that until quite recently, everybody was talking about freedom for which the 19th stood in their minds but now that they've got it, they don't have any notion of enjoying it with a frolic which they did enjoy before receiving it.

She remarked upon a couple of lusty looking gourd vines she could see from where she sat on the front gallery. I showed her a big bushel gourd, the seeds from which I had already planted, all save two and asked her if she wouldn't like to try her hand at raising bushel gourds from these last two rare seeds. She said she would like to plant them by her fence and so I rounded up the two remaining kernels which I handed to her. She scrutinized them in the palm of her hand, remarking that they looked like fertile seeds and immediately broke one in two, declaring that from the interior of the broken one, one might tell readily enough that the seeds were indeed fertile, obviously quite contented to keep the last one to plant, not so much as remarking that in establishing the proof, she had ruined half her potentials for a crop.

Today's Natchitoches Times mentions that Mrs. James Register, Mrs. Sudie Lawton and Mrs. Ruth C. Rabtree were flying to Baton Rouge today to



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attend the Wallace rally. As Kay does not like to have her name in the papers, I assume that Sudie took care of the press release. Yesterday's rate mentioned that ex-Governor Wallace of Alabama was coming to Louisiana in quest of funds for his campaign and I have no doubt he got at least one check from the three ladies. My estimate of the value of the political opinions of all three ladies rolled into a single pill wouldn't amount to much. One may be quite sure that the idea of going was Sudie's, the whole thing paid by Kay and the party swelled from 2 to 3 by Mrs. Crabtree expected to round out her role of companion by filling out the triangle.

I called Mrs. Genung today by way of cheering her up although she scarcely needed any word from me. She said her daughter must be in Key West by now since her brother-in-law has a fine new car in which they were traveling and therefore, since it is new, they must have made it from Nashville to the tip of Florida in no time at all. Her calculations are often like that. I am under the impression whatever educational institutions there may be in Key West, it should not be very popular with prospective teachers since, in view of its remote situation from the mainland and more or less little more than an atoll riding between the Gulf and the Atlantic, probably few people, sensing the impossibility of traveling anywhere by automobile except up and down the endless drive connecting it with the mainland, nobody could be expected to remove themselves to such an isolated spot on one's own volition. But such conclusions, however, in the present case, will be reached only after the pre-arrival novelty has worn off.

The tender yellow butternut corn from the garden to the dinner table this noon tasted especially delicious and somehow went very nicely with the steaksmeothered in garden onions and the mustard greens, the tomatoes and beets were as delectable as yesterday's. I must ask Doreatha to fry in batter some of the sliced tomatoes of the firmer consistency which I find so good, with or without a white sauce.

My neighbors are banqueting in town again tonight and for myself I am having a 10 o'clock snack out of blueberry muffins and peach icecream.....

15563

Friday, June 21st, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy to partly cloudy, a few insignificant sprinkles and continued warm. There was nothing especially extraordinary about the day and yet there were minor ripples of the unexpected. At breakfast I learned Lloyd Wenk had left for Shreveport to pick up his family and bring them back to the camp.

About 10:30 this morning, Lloyd's mama blew in unannounced from Shreveport, stating that she had come down to visit her son. When she was told that Lloyd was in Shreveport she announced she would return there. Whether she was told that he expected to come back to Cane River during the afternoon, I don't know. Be that as it may, at just about the moment she was driving away up the Bermuda road, Lloyd was driving in to the camp, having come via Montrose. I believe, in fact, I am sure, his mama did not see him. One may assume she did indeed return to Shreveport although it is quite within the realm of possibility that she stopped at Natchitoches and therefore may change her mind and return here tonight.

As you may have already noticed on receiving yesterday's memo, the address was started so far down the envelope that there was no space for the last line. I noticed it when arriving at the Post Office and as the postman was about to depart, I asked the clerk to put the last line in by hand.

There was an unexpected mention of a New Orleans resident that was really rather odd. In this morning's out-going mail I posted a letter to Judge Rubin and wife and sent along a Hunter canvas they had ordered. A couple of hours later, I had a phone call from the Morin's a mile down the road. They look after the Kaffy camp down there and reported that one of the Kaffy families from New Orleans had just arrived for the weekend and asked if they might make a tour. They might.

Thinking I might learn something about Martha Robinson from a New Orleans resident, I asked Mr. Caffy if he knew the lady. He remarked that it



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Friday, June 22nd, 1968.

was odd that I had asked about her for although he had not heard anything about her in a long time, it just chanced that last night he had chanced to pass by the home of Judge Alvin Rubin whose back garden runs to the Audubon Place neighborhood where Mrs. Robinson lives. He said he thought Judge Rubin's property was on Walnut Street, about 225 while Mrs. Robinson's home was about 27 Audubon Place. Somehow it seems a strange coincidence that Caffy should have closed the Rubin-Lestan triangle so swiftly on the heels of the Rubin-Lestan correspondence.

The combination of baseball pre-empting news broadcasts and static knocking out reception when the baseball bat doesn't, I am getting but sketchy accounts of what goes on in the world these days, especially in the evening. I was glad tonight that David Brinkley got in under the wire although I was sorry that Chet Huntley who generally follows Brinkley was out off for a ball game. The Brinkley suggestion that the reason for resigning as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was to guarantee President Johnson an opportunity to appoint a new Chief Justice before leaving office and thus prevent there being any hope for Mr. Nixon to get an opportunity to do so in case he should become the Johnson successor. According to Mr. Brinkley, two Californians who have little liking for each other are Messrs Warren and Nixon and that Mr. Warren felt moved to circumvent any chance of Nixon appointing an arch conservative to the post. I find myself wondering if Mr. Goldberg hopes to return to the Supreme Court and if Mr. Johnson might appoint his friend, Justice Clifford or rather Justice Porter to the Chief Justice post and return Mr. Goldberg to the Court to fill the Porter vacancy, assuming the latter were to be moved up.

Carmen called to give a report on the fine party she gave for her California niece at the old Lemee House. All I can recall she said was that for punch she chilled the punch bowl and then put in herbet and just a little ice and plenty of ginger ale. That sounds alright to me and make me think of the cottage cheese, stepped up with ripe tomato, bell peppers and cucumbers awaiting my attention in the icebox.

15565

12263

Sunday, June 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

A strange weather system is operating in this area, with the general movement of disturbances flowing westward instead of the usual eastward path. Cloudiness obtains with occasional sprinkles and the humidity is as high as the sky. The temperature is in the upper 80's and lower 90's.

As you may have already noticed, I did not post Friday's memo in Saturday's mail. The entire morning was an unending merry-go-round of people from 8 o'clock until noon. Never once during that time did I get disentangled from people. The out-going mail didn't matter so much since there was nothing very important by way of news but I did mean the absence or rather the inability to see the barber for whom I had been waiting for over a month.

After galloping through a tour for 8 and a second group of equal number, I found myself confronted by Dale Deblieux, a brother of Bobby, whose mother had called Celeste to ask if she thought I could give Dale a whirl. Dale works in a Vicksburg bank and had come to Natchitoches for the weekend, bringing with him one of the nicest people I ever met, a youth whose home town across the waves is quite close to the birthplace of none other than little Miss Lee. Needless to say, we had so many things to talk about in the old country, everything from distinguished scientific minds born in that area to les cheateaux de Louis deux de Baviere further afield. I was so very pleasant and so very maddening that other pilgrims had been sent to gum up the works. But it all went off pretty well and I was ready for food when noon arrived. The clerk and I were alone inasmuch as the cook, along with everybody else on the place, had gone to town to attend the annual meeting of R. E.A. subscribers who were all hoping to win a deep freeze or some such since there are always prizes given to the lucky ticket holders at such meetings.

My afternoon was equally filled with people, one group being 9 youngsters who with their parents were visiting Lloyd at the camp, not to mention some people from Baton Rouge who were friends of friends of the family.

This morning I received a call from Thelma. She and John had found some

.....



15566

Japanese water hyacinths in south Louisiana and brought them back for me. On reaching home they had found a letter from a Mr. Bibermann of New York who is producer of the film that is to be made somewhere around, the one entitled The Slave. I can't think why but Mr. Bibermann had written John to request that he serve as consultant on the film, among other things to determine that everything was in the spirit of the ante bellum times being stressed in the proposed film. John does not pass as an authority on that subject and wondered how he had been called upon to serve and asking himself if the film producer was looking for a Louisiana to give a certain spirit of authenticity to the story being contemplated. Accordingly Thelma and John were leaving for Shreveport this noon to attend a meeting of those concerned with the film, after which John would decide if he would serve or not. I reckon I shall be hearing from Thelma on the morrow.

At 2 o'clock this afternoon, thinking, foolishly, that I would have a quiet evening, what with the sprinkling going on, and so I started a column, "For the Birds". After getting a scant third of it done, Carmen called to ask if she might bring down her California niece and the latter's daughter. She might. That killed the column right there or at least put it on ice until later in the day. And so the three ladies came and remained too long and by it was time for supper across the fence and a chitchat about problems revolving around Tuesday's party for the Cohen girl who nuptials are approaching.

Back home a little after 9, I resumed the column, finishing it by 10 and relaxed to have a little chat with the Lady of Lyme before calling it a day.

I had not turned on the radio all day and so I do not know how the voting turned out in France, but I have no doubt that Tall Charlie came through safely although I shall regret only a little less that he should win that I should wring my hands, should his opponents carry the day. It's a lamentable state of affairs when there are but two alternatives and one must decide between either the devil or the deep blue sea, -- or more precisely the deep red sea in this instance.

After folding up my beard on Saturday night and while threading my way on radio between baseball and hill billy music, I chanced on a fascinating program out of St. Louis. It had to do with the last of the four great mounds in that area, each several miles apart but all within the same national confines of a highly developed Indian tribe living in that area around 1100 and 1200. This last surviving mound is situated near Cahokia and I am hoping Father Wilson will send me clippings about it and the success that may attend efforts to save it from destruction. Seturneth the weekend and I held the the it was less active in little Miss Lee's neighborhood.....

15567

Monday, June 24th, 1968.

Memorandum: no to discuss at lunch time or before lunch. Our "dews and damps" continue with another inch of rain, spread out between sprinkles and showers from morning until night. But there was plenty of sunshine to be found in today's post where I found Friday's grand letter with enclosures at the post office. I received a letter from the patient who has already gone on before.

It is too bad the health of the ailing one is deteriorating so rapidly. In a way it seems rather odd that both he and his mate should have had so little time left following the breakup of their menagemenage. If the patient has reached a hopeless stage, it is of course better that there be no lingering and that he may the soon join in a better, happier world the companion who has already gone on before.

As for the friend, now on vacation, contemplating an operation on the return, let us hold the thought that that go along smoothly. As you observed, such surgery is usually considered messy but not dangerous. In a way it seems a pity that the operation could not have come first so that the vacation would provide a recuperative period but I suppose there were many factors to be considered and the present one is the best all around.

I scarcely need to remark with what enthusiasm I am awaiting receipt of the items which are now enroute. I had heard some reference on the radio in which the Kennedy publication was being advertised by Life. I think it is wonderful that they are issuing this special, out of subscription, item for there will be so many people who will be grateful that such a record is made available.

As for the Vaur-le-Vicomte item, I find it thrilling just to anticipate it. I have admired the property so long and have always been fascinated by the various scraps of information that over the years have come to light about it so that my thirst for refreshing old memories and gaining new bits of information runs on insatiably.

I was thinking just the other day about Nicholas Fouquet and wond



15568

why I never read a good biography on that subject. Perhaps I neglected to cast about in search of one or, on the other hand, perhaps I did do some casting about without having any success in my quest. I can remember well enough having encountered him as a minor character in one or another novel of the period but never with any satisfaction and always with the realization that I should be careful not to swallow all that the novelists had to say about him since it happens often that a novelist will extract episodes from the lives of unrelated people and, for the convenience of the writer, pin such things on some perfectly innocent person who never had the slightest thing to do with the tale thus told and, as sometimes has happened, didn't even live in the same century. One thing and from a strictly historic point of view, I have never understood the surprising animosity that one is given to believe Louis XIV had for Fouquet. Some novelists have indicated that Quatorze hoped Fouquet would be given the death penalty after his fall. One scribe has tried to explain this by saying that Quatorze was jealous of Fouquet over Louise de la Valiere but I never found the slightest reason for such a trumped up excuse. And, of course, a remarkable thing about Quatorze was that no matter what happened--and a lot did happen, --he never gave any signs of vindictiveness. One or another biographer of Quatorze has suggested that Quatorze was shocked by the lavishness of the Fouquet expenditures but I never was impressed by that notion either for Mazarin whose residence across the river from Louvre, was quite an establishment and still is, of course as the home of the Academie, not to mention the fine church he built in Rome, and then, too, there were the expenditures of Cardinal Richelieu, such as his residence, the Palais Royal and his enormous country house down in the country. No, I cannot believe it was a matter of money, and, come to think of it, Quatorze never got excited when Col developed his fine property at Seaux. Much has been written about the Fouquet trial but up to now, I have never figured out the thing to my satisfaction.

I am sorry the package, sent on the 7th, had not arrived on the 11th. If it doesn't come to hand, we can readily enough secure another copy of the Northrup book about his years in slavery and I am quite sure I can secure another copy of the Walker thesis which was in the same package. And speaking of Mrs. Walker, her mother called me today to say she had talked with her daughter who d like Key West at all but was crazy about Fort Lauderdale. She expects her home sometime this week, after which they will make for the Florida move.

The postman was an hour earlier than usual today and thus Friday and Sunday's memo will go forward in the same post with this.....

15569

# New Orange Nut Bread

- 1 cup ground orange rind
- one half cup water
- 2 tablespoons of sugar
- 2 and one fourth cups of plain unsifted flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 and one half teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 thirds cup of milk
- 3 tablespoons melted shortening
- 2 eggs
- three fourth cup chopped walnuts

## instructions

in advance, grind rinds of two large or three small oranges medium fine. Measure one cup in the sauce pan, stir in water and 2 tablespoons sugar. Cover and cook on low heat 10 to 15 minutes until most of water is absorbed. Cool. Sift flour, sugar, baking powder and salt into mixing bowl. Add milk, shortening and eggs. Beat mixture at low speed just until smooth. Stir in orange rind and water. Quickly drop batter into the greased 9 by 5 by 3 inch roasting pan. If desired, sprinkle top with mixture of one half teaspoon cinnamon and 2 tablespoons sugar. Bake at 350 about 65 minutes until done when tested. Cool on rack.



15570

New Orange fruit bread  
I cup ground orange rind  
one half cup water  
2 tablespoons of sugar  
2 and one fourth cups of plain sifted flour  
1 cup sugar  
2 and one half teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 thirds cup of milk  
2 tablespoons melted shortening  
2 eggs  
three fourth cup chopped walnuts  
Instructions  
In advance, grind rind of two large or three small  
or use medium fine. Measure one cup  
in the sauce pan, stir in water and 2 tablespoons sugar.  
Cover and cook on low heat 10 to 15 minutes until most of  
it is absorbed. Cool. Sift flour, sugar, baking powder and salt  
into mixing bowl. Add milk, shortening and  
eggs. Beat mixture at low speed  
just until smooth. Stir in orange rind and water. Turn out  
into buttered loaf pan. Bake at 350 degrees  
for 45 minutes. Sprinkle top with mixture of one half teaspoon cinnamon and  
2 tablespoons sugar. Bake at 350 degrees  
85 minutes until  
done when tested. Cool outback.

15570

Tuesday, June 25th, 1966.

Memorandum:

Humidity and heat in the 90's, being cloudy this morning  
but fair this afternoon and tonight.

J. H. is expected back from Shreveport where he went to  
the hospital this morning for some tests.

For a couple of weeks my coffee companion has been building up  
plans for the party she and Dee Hertzog gave across the fence this  
afternoon for the Cohen girl, an incipient bride. It is  
surprising to one inexperienced as I in such social undertakings that  
the preparations should cover such a prolonged period in advance.

One item in the preparations was an ample supply of grandiflora  
magnolias which I volunteered to supply. Perhaps it is due to  
the excessive rains that so few blossoms are available at the moment.  
Before dawn I was astir and when the first streaks of light appeared,  
I was heading out with a ladder and saw to procure the dozen or so  
flowers I had surveyed yesterday afternoon just to be sure  
I could find them in the semi-darkness of the next morning.

I put them in a bucket filled with water on the gal lery of the  
house next door, seeing no one at that early hour.

At breakfast I found the clerk unusually unpleasant. As is  
my custom, I threw out three or four subjects I thought might be of  
interest but he dismissed them all with short shrift. I  
didn't know what was biting him, having forgotten that some people  
can be disagreeable with anybody if they are concerned about somebody  
else.

A little after breakfast, a grapevine reported that J. H., contrary  
to custom, had not appeared at the store and it was assumed he wasn't feel  
well. When I went to 9 o'clock coffee, I learned the lady doctor  
had been summoned sometime prior to that time and thought he  
might have had a slight stroke. He seemed much as usual but the coordinati  
tests seemed lacking in sprightliness. And then along with several others  
present, for the clerk and an overseer or two and one or two people  
I didn't recognize had appeared for coffee, and our hostess ex-  
plained her dilemma or is it dilemma or whatever, --  
whether to cancel the party or go through with it, what to do about this  
and that, etc., etc., and the upshot, as I learned later,  
was that J. H. would go to Shreveport to take some tests while his wife  
remained at home to carry through her social activities. Lull  
Hankins driving J. H. to Shreveport, -- J. H. having walked  
from the house to the car, and after the party tonight, Lloyd



15571

Wenk would drive Celeste to Shreveport to be with J. H. until he was discharged from the hospital. And that was the morning.

At the Post Office I was all impatience to see if Vaux-le-Vicomte had come through but realized, of course, that it was still a little early to be here. Perhaps tomorrow it will come. In the meantime, I am holding the thought that the Northrup book for little Miss Lee may have reached its destination.

And speaking of Vaux-le-Vicomte, I am reminded that when jotting down last night's memo, I got so carried away with Nicholas Fouquet that I failed to touch on the news I was so glad to receive from little Miss Lee about her little visit to her cousin may be interpreted as a sign that she is feeling pretty well and let's hold the thought, too, that her little excursion may have been beneficial as an outing.

I think I also failed to mention that I was enclosing in yesterday's envelope the recipe for the orange nut bread I liked so much the other day when dining at 209 South Williams. I called Mrs. Crabtree who dictated it to me and it may well turn out that the typing was such that not much could be made of it. I recall one place where I wrote "2 thirds" instead of a better way but in her dictation, she gave me or I invented the impression she was going to say something like 2 teaspoons or some such but it turned out to be "2 thirds".

It was served as bread at the luncheon and mighty good it was but it seems to me it might be equally tasty if, in lieu of something better, one might sue it as the foundation for a dessert simply by placing a slice on a small plate and pouring over it almost any kind of a sauce, hot or cold or merely tepid. I suppose a dab of orange sherbet might do nicely, too, if that happened to be handier than a sauce.

I talked with Mrs. Genung for a moment this morning, just to let her know I was thinking of her. I think she had not been drinking but she was certainly mixed up, passing along particulars that were just the opposite of what she had told me a few days before, as for example, when she spoke of Key West a while back, she said her daughter had reported she disliked the place in striking contrast to today's report which stated LaWalker just loved Key West, its old houses reminding her so much of Natchitoches. It didn't matter either way and she had the fun of chatting a little.

The telephone company picked up my reading machine for repairs today. I miss it but hope to get it back soon.....

15572

Wednesday, June 26th, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy and humid with a promise of clearing skies tonight. Thermometer in the 80's, following a 2 inch rain this morning between 4 and 6.

I had coffee with my accustomed 9 o'clock partner this morning. Yesterday's party was a great success. At its conclusion the lady journeyed with Lloyd to Shreveport to chat with her husband and the physician who turns out to be a darling person. The doctor says the patient must give up the plantation although no tests will be made until today. The lady will return to Shreveport or rather did return this afternoon and will come back tomorrow, probably with her husband. As for the latter, as I see it, he has long carried three major loads, the uncontrollable impulse to keep road running, his family and the plantation. Since he cannot be expected to give up the first two, the third appears inevitable.

There was 1st class mail today but the Vaux-le-Vicomte item was not in the postman mail sack today. I shall be looking for it on the morrow. The surprise among the letters was the note from Frances Rand Jack, telling me that Blythe had broken her leg and is in the Baptist hospital in Alexandria. I shall make it a point to drop Blythe a daily note until she is up and about once more. It seems to me she is in her late 70's and so I suppose the mending of the will be a somewhat extended experience.

The card from Florida was from Mrs. Walker. Her mother called me this morning to say she had heard from her daughter who had taken a teaching job in Piatha, on the St. John's River, in Florida. One can never be sure of information supplied by the mother but she can consider what she says as possible. She spelled out the word, Piatha, from memory, not having the card in front of her. She had never heard of the place and I must confess I was hearing it for the first time as she spelled it out. I suppose one might assume Piatha might be an Indian name which are always difficult for me. I have heard of Mr. Longfellow's Hiawatha but cannot say if Piatha is any relation to the Longfellow here. Perhaps in one or another of the Indian tongues, that ending, atha, may mean something or other but for me it is merely something less than, shall I say, Greek.



15573

The card from Pie DuFour, posted from Amsterdam, was an unexpected plaisir. I shall be curious to learn when he returns if his stay in Holland hinged at all on the uncertainty about getting out of France on a particular date. His column in the Picayune last Sunday was dated from Paris ... in-  
terruption, --I. S. Willard calling, ---  
As I think I was saying. Pie in his column during the past several months, has been concentrating pretty heavily on the 250th anniversary of New Orleans and I assume he probably had a lot of stuff he wanted to go into while abroad, although perhaps Holland falls within his range of interests, too.

I. S. Willard wanted an address of somebody in Lafayette although it took us quite a while to arrive at the name of the party she had in mind to write. She had something to say about her impending travels although she didn't say when she contemplated leaving for Germany to see her new grandchild who was scheduled to be born in England on the 25th. I am glad for everybody in her son's new family, not to mention I. S. W., that he has found a house where, supposedly, there will be ample room for the family when it moves into the community, a suburb, I believe, of Bonn.

Another interruption....Natalie. She has a busy Sunday planned for just ahead. Somebody in New Orleans is giving a party for her son's August bride. Natalie and her husband will drive to Shreveport on Sunday, catching a noon plane from there for the Crescent City and then take a Sundaynight train from there back home, reaching Natchitoches at 2 in the morning if the train is on time which it never is and be in school by 8 o'clock Monday morning. The craziest thing she had to relate concerns her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren. The son-in-law will serve as Cousin Arthur's chief deputy at the Chicago Convention. Natalie's daughter and her husband have rented a bus to drive them and the five or six children to the Windy City for the Convention which, of course, sounds impossible. Cousin Arthur, although Democratic State Chairman, is actually supporting Wallace. It all sounds so dishonest, wacky and tiresome. I must sound so, too. May I do better on the morrow.....

15574

Thursday, June 27th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Dazzling sunshine by day, glittering stars by night, thermometer down to 59 last night and up to 80 today:

"Oh, what is so rare as a day in June,  
Then, if ever, come perfect days....."

Thanks to the splendid translation by little Miss Lee, my thoughts all day have been revolving around Vaux or Vaux-le-Vicomte, Fouquet and all the rest.

What a wealth of information the translation contains and I shall of course attach it to the article when it arrives.

And how glad I am to have the bibliography on Fouquet.

The references to Professor Wolf's study sound so promising. I must say I had never thought of the King's fear that Fouquet might start a Fronde. I have heard it said that one reason why Quatre preferred country life to that in the city might possibly have been because he remembered the disorders of the Fronde. But as that scuffle took place when he was merely a child, it has always seemed to me that it is very unlikely the Fronde made any impression on him at all. Nevertheless it is quite within the realm of possibility that there may have been some doubts in high circles that one or another person might start opposition to established power for that seems to be a possibility as old as the hills and, of course, the fact that Fouquet had fortified Belle Isle might arouse suspicions. As of the moment, however, I am inclined to think that if both Mazarin and Colbert, both men with ideas of their own, may have been keeping an eye on Fouquet and possibly trying to influence the King against Fouquet in order to solidify their own positions, the break between the King and his minister may be the more readily understood.

One of the most impressive statements in the translation so far as my immediate reaction was concerned lay in the statement that Vaux-le-Vicomte numbered some thirteen thousand books in its library. It isn't easy to imagine correctly what any given number of books might represent, even 13,000 and yet, I do recall from childhood a library that housed just about that number of books in a particular library and so can judge the better about what space that number covers. And thinking of other chateaux in the 17th century almost any place in



15575

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Europe and one can but wonder in what other chateaux than Vaux-le-Vicomte would one be likely to find such a treasure of printed works. It seems to me such a library is another evidence of the unique attributes of Fouquet himself. One can but marvel, too, that such an heroic undertaking as the mere building of the chateau and its dependencies, the construction of its gardens, the marshalling of all its artists, etc., etc., could have been brought into flower in such a remarkably short time, -- something like 3 years which seems almost incredible. Surely the world has never seen many Fouquets and I feel ashamed of myself that I don't know more about him. You may well believe I am looking forward with eagerness to whatever illustrations come to hand concerning this remarkable man. It strikes me it is rare to know of anyone appreciating grandeur on such a scale and, of course, very very few such disciples of the Arts ever have the opportunity to cultivate them as did Fouquet.

I had a 'phone call mid morning, possibly from Alexandria, asking for an appointment for tomorrow afternoon at 2 for Heritage, Mrs. Eakin et al to discuss Quarterly matters. I agreed to the hour and day although Friday isn't the ideal day of the week for conferences, especially at just this time of the year.

In today's post there wasn't anything of particular interest and one or two letters such as from the Anglo-American Museum will be retained for further re-reading. The Judge Ruins were apparently pleased with the picture from Mrs. Hunter's brush which I sent them and I am glad because her work apparently does something for them both in re-calling plantation life.

I rather expected James might put in an appearance today but he didn't. As he is supposed to deliver the hyacinths Thelma and John brought me from south Louisiana, I haven't called them as yet and shall not until I can tell them the plants are to hand. Nevertheless I am impatient to get a report on their adventures of last Sunday when they journeyed to Shreveport for the conference about the making of the film, "The Slave" and thus find out something about how that project is shaping up.

Clara Genung 'phoned to say she had heard from Mrs. Walker who likes Leesburg, Florida, better than any place she has visited with a view to determining upon a place of residence. Mrs. Genung said that Leesburg is somewhere near Tallahassee on a river but that was she guessed and her guesses can be 'way off on occasion.

I heard nothing about the people across the fence and hold the thought that no news is good news. And now for some deskwork and that will be it.....

P. S.

forgot to say I sent some Picayune papers in rolled up manner this morning. nothing of importance, merely though you might enjoy turning through them but nothing is lost if you lack time to glance through them

15576

Friday, June 28th, 1968.

Memorandum: Notes of a morning

Fair with a temperature spread from 61 to 92 and a pleasant southwest breeze to make things pleasant.

I was as happy as a clam at the Post Office this morning when I was handed the package from little Miss Lee. I carried it along with the other mail until I got inside the front gate when I directed my steps to the big old bench under the live oak. There I sat down and opened the package at once, enchanted with both the front and back covers of *Connaissance des Arts*, May, 1968, and immediately jumped right into the magazine, so thoughtfully marked by little Miss Lee where I read in the large type "Vaux-le-Vicomte. Needless to say I continued turning the pages, enchanted with all the splendid illustrations and just as I came to the last one, I heard Thelma Kyser's voice at the gate and in two seconds she and John were beside me, as entranced as I with all we had to see. Before arising from the bench, John asked Thelma for the pen and notebook she was carrying in her purse so that he might jot down the name of the magazine and both its Paris and New York addresses. I never open my mail until reaching Yucca but this morning, knowing that the Kyseres were going to appear shortly, I thought it best to wait for them by the front gate but I simply couldn't resist taking my first glance at the article, the text of which had already digested prior to receipt of the publication itself.

The balance of my day during daylight hours was so taken with various matters that I couldn't get to starting in again until about twilight and now I'm impatient for the dawn to start in all over again for I can make out the pictures to better advantage by daylight than artificial light. What a wealth of pictorial and printed material and what a joy to have this copy ever at my finger tips when I want to re-visit such a lovely place and marvelous age. It is difficult to think of any place, brought into being in the modern world that is so beautifully laid out and somehow retains the flavor of so many classic characters of a classic as Vaux-le-Vicomte and in the days ahead, thanks to little Miss Lee, I shall be able to re-visit both the place and the age whenever the impulse moves me to do so.



15577

15577

Thelma had called me before 8 this morning, asking if s  
he John might come down to bring me the water hyacinths, bringi  
along a camera to catch some pictures of the crepe myrtles u  
she thought must be in full bloom here as they are in town.  
they are laggardly here this year and will not mean much  
photographically until next week but to come along regardless

She said they had dined last night with Kay and James a  
209, mentioning the general set-up, the excellence of the fa  
the enthusiastic mention of Wallace by Kay, --the Kysers  
are Nixon people, --the dexterity of Mrs. Crabtree, etc., etc

Thelma also spoke of last Sunday and the meeting in Shr  
with some of the movie people. They were favorably impress  
and John is reading the script of "The Slave" as  
consultant. The cameras are scheduled to start shooting Jul  
The house that will serve as pivot for the piece to revolve  
is Bueana Vista, a rather modest ante bellum hom in  
north Louisiana, not far from Land's End. The  
part of the slave will be played by some colored gentleman,  
to movie-goers and TV watchers, his name being Ossie Smith,  
whom I had never heard since Paul Robeson is about the last  
man of color I can remember seeing on stage and screen. One  
gathers the film will be comparatively modest since it is so  
involve only a million dollars in the making. Under the  
table, the city of Shreveport has put in a hundred thousand  
but doesn't want the fact known until after some city electio  
been held, something involving city expenditures. I do not  
know why the city of Shreveport should be contributing but suppo  
on the theory that the making of the film in that area will  
be commercially beneficial to the city.

Mrs. Aiken, bringing five people with her, arrived this  
afternoon. All 5 had cameras and she turned them loose in  
the gardens while she and I conferred for an hour on Heritage  
matters after which she called in the head of the  
Department of L. S. U. --History, --and we three had a go at  
things for another hour. Occasionally a dab of gossip got  
into the conversation, one bit having to do with Dr. Davis of  
U., the man who did the book with much research by many,  
including Edith Wyatt Moore, to turn out the book about  
William Johnson, the ante bellum free man of color. It seem  
Dr. Davis has made several recordings for Heritage, none  
of which came up to disc standards and all were accordingly  
rejected.

Celeste called me from across the way tonight. She is  
here for the night returning to Shreveport in the morning.  
She says there was no blockage from the mild stroke J. H. ha  
They will perhaps return here Sunday.

And again my thanks for Vaux.....

15578

15578

Sunday, June 30th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 90's with high humidity.

Saturday's post was just grand, bringing as it did both  
the letter from Lyme and the special Kennedy issue of Life.

It was so good to have such a refreshing account of things as  
they swirl in the Lyme area. I follow the progress of  
Mr. B. with interest and I am especially glad to have the  
various aspect of the case and how it is being handled.

I can well imagine the peculiar feeling about the position taken  
by the physician in the case of Mr. B. Somehow it  
reminds me of a husband and wife combination about which jokes  
used to be made in this area. The husband was a physician, the wife  
and people were want to say that if the undertaking business  
got slow, the medical department would step it up quickly and without  
much ado about it.

As for the matter of air conditioning and the effect it might we  
have produced, anyone can readily understand that alright, --  
except, perhaps, those who don't want to.

On reaching Yucca from the mail, I immediately unrolled the magaz  
and placed it under a couple of books before looking into it so that  
might be nice and flat which it was, indeed, within five minutes.  
There is no question about it, the photographs are really  
remarkably fine and all weekend I have divided my free time be-  
tween turning through it and *Cronaca des Arts*,  
loving everything I run across and doubly indebted to little Miss Le  
for all both of these publications mean to me. It  
was so helpful, too, in having the text read to me in the *Vaux-le-Voc*  
article, putting dozens of ideas into my mind as  
I read the one and then absorbed the illustrations.

I did something today on impulse concerning  
Natalie and for the life of me, I can't think what impelled me to do  
it. She had told me what a busy weekend this one was going to  
be, how she and her husband would be flying from  
Shreveport to New Orleans for the reception being given for  
their future daughter-in-law  
and how they would be returning late-late tonight. But in spite



15579

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of that acquaintance with the agenda I somehow felt an impulse to dial the house mid-morning and to my surprise which really wasn't exactly a surprise and yet was a surprise, I recognized her voice. She said that she was in the bed in spite of the heat and the air condition out of joint and nobody to repair it. She said about 4 o'clock on Saturday morning she had awakened with a terrible thumping of her heart, had called the doctor, -- the lady doctor, who immediately told her to cancel her weekend plans and remain quiet. This she did while her husband rounded up their daughter and the latter's eldest child to whom the plane tickets were given so some members of the family could be present at today's reception in the Crescent. She says she plans to go to school on Monday morning but supposes she must follow the doctor's orders and slow down. An excellent idea, I should think, if she will.

The folks across the fence returned from their Shreveport stay this evening about 6 and I supped with them and chatted until about 8:30. J. H. having gone to bed a while before that, giving Celeste an opportunity to tell me some of her problems, especially in having to be constantly near J. H. so that he may not try to take a step by himself for the next two or three weeks when his reflexes are expected to improve guarantee him better balance. His diabetic condition presents quite a problem, -- one he has had for years but one which he inclines to ignore so far as avoiding sugar and so on. Before retiring he set his alarm clock for 6 a.m. to be at the start at the beginning of the day's activities. The doctor says it is time that he not try to take a step, not even from his bed to the bath, without someone at his elbow. Celeste says he will not cooperate in such matters and doesn't know how to keep an eye on him for he refuses to let anyone lend him a hand.

The stay in Shreveport was pretty good for the most part. Sister didn't know he was there for the first two or three days when Mat Hertzog gave her the news and then there were the usual difficulties. I'm wondering if we shall be honored with a visitation this week of the 4th of July.

I hold the thought things may rock along sedately in Lyme.....

15580

15580

Monday, July 1st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid in the 90's with electric storms somewhere around, making radio reception resemble bunches of Chinese firecrackers exploding in a tin pot.

In the health department, the merchant-planter was up and doing at 6 this morning but he would have done better to have spent that hour resting, it seems to me.

He was sitting on the store gallery when I passed that way about 6:30 and, of course, I paused to inquire if he had slept pretty well. He said he had and that actually there was nothing wrong with his health at all, just a little stiffness in the joints. He spent the day in his air-conditioned office but, instead of coming to supper at 5, returned to his house. His wife is in a highly nervous state.

Mrs. Chopin called me tonight to inquire if I had talked with Natalie lately. She said she had had to call her to pass along a message this evening and found that her voice sounded "so far away". I tried without success to reach her daughter on the phone and shall try again tomorrow. I concluded from the fact that she answered Mrs. Chopin's call herself, that she must be around but am wondering if she tried to go to school today. In her case, as in the one at this bend of the river, determination undertake too many things is a determining factor in the progress of the patient.

This morning about sunrise, as I was surveying the nice dew-drenched vegetable garden, I found myself thinking of little Miss Lee in the vegetable section of the market, wishing I could roll some of the plump eggplants, tomatoes and bell peppers in her direction. As she mentioned a reverse flow of thoughts along the same line in last Thursday's letter, so, as though in response, the thoughts naturally responded in the opposite direction. I find it mildly amusing but at the same quite enchanting that the sight of such good things should set off a flow of thoughts in opposite directions.



12280

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Today's post brought a letter from Mrs. Eakin, touching on one or two points which I think require a response but I can make one only after having re-read the letter with the assistance of a secretary somewhat more gifted in interpreting longhand. There was something about a family tree of the Prudhommes, the letter, according to Mrs. Eakin, having come from Mrs. C. Vernon Clautier. I cannot imagine what this is all about since Beth & has always been very cagey about letting anyone see the fine piece of business she has gathered together over the years. It doesn't seem possible Beth could be offering the thing to Heritage but one never knows. I must knock off a note tonight to Mrs. Eakin, putting a flea in her ear about this matter. Perhaps tomorrow I shall secure the services of a more proficient reader and thus be able to unscramble the thing.

I am mailing this week's column in the "Hatchitoches" paper by today's post. The column is entitled "Goldie Hunter". There were several phone calls today about it. Oddly enough some of the callers asked that I do something more about Goldie. The reason this is odd is because I have already written a piece for next week's paper under the title of "More About Goldie". In the column business, it is so unusual for me to have already knocked off a column on some subject before anyone has asked me to do it.

Carmen called me today to recite a rather amusing episode of a little trip her niece from California made last Friday morning. Somebody in town had engaged Bobby Deblieux's little river boat to entertain 10 or 15 people by taking everybody on a 2 hour ride up and down the stream. Everyone was eager to acquaint the Californian with the names of the various properties passed by the boat although time had a way of slipping along between sandwiches and drinks that two ladies in particular, --I. S. W. was one of them, got hopelessly entangled in identifying the landmarks, what with the boat sliding along so smoothly over the water that the respective authorities were quite at odds with each other about the ownership of various places since most of the time, one lady or the other, was peering toward shore at places that they didn't realize, had long since gone out of sight as the boat proceeded on its way while the contestants apparently labored under the impression that the boat wasn't moving.

So the 4th of July week gets under way and I hold the thou it may be a quiet one.....

12283

15582

Tuesday, July 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

A thunderstorm, roving around and about all night made any attempt at radio listening futile. This morning dawned hot and humid for the thunderstorm had never come very close, --the Joyous Coast around Bermuda getting only a little rain. Today remained in the 90's until 4:30 in the afternoon when there was more thunder and a dab of rain and tonight the thunder rolls on.

James dropped in about 10:30 this morning and remained for dinner. He says Studie and Kay are both beating the drums for Wallace, Studie taking to the road, Kay to the telephone. Studie the other day, finding herself up near Saline, took the opportunity to drop in on the Briarwood lady. When Studie started to tell her about going to Baton Rouge with Kay and Mrs. Crabtree, Carrie responded that she was quite sure Studie was traveling on Kay's money and Studie couldn't wait to get back to Hatchitoches to tell Kay about Studie spending her money, according to the Dorman inference. Studie, claiming to be friends of both ladies, is following her usual course of trying to knock out the friendship of Kay and Carrie so she can claim each as friends while keeping the others apart. A tiresome bag, if I ever knew one.

Last Thursday when the Registers were planning to have the Kyers for dinner, Kay suggested early in the afternoon that they skip up to 1226 to round up flowers in the garden there to decorate 201 South Williams for the evening festivities. James suggested that they would do better to stay out of the heat, day being then so far advanced and said he would purchase some flowers from the florist's, thereby saving Kay's energy and a lot of money, too, should she ever do in gathering flowers herself, should exhaustion end up in requiring a physician to get her back on her feet. But Kay was adamant about using flowers from 1226 and, of course, nearly got a heat stroke. After the Kyser dinner, Kay dropped and Dr. Worsley was called and Kay has been droopy ever since with no end of special medicines. The better part of the entire weekend was spent in bed as a result of the sedation but today she was moseying about sufficiently to invite me to come to town to dinner some day this week.



15583

15583

The heavy rains of the Spring tended to delay the okra growth this year and so it was only today that we had our first okra gumbo of the present season. Doreatha makes it just right and I was glad there was an ample supply for across the fence and for James who loves it, the clerk and I. Doreatha used chicken gizzards for the foundation and both James and I went back for a second go-round.

The clerk had brought some small plants of the candelabra plant this morning and express the opinion it would do well to set them out before the sun got too hot. I had other ideas and waited until 4 this afternoon when the cloud coverage began. Although I watered them after getting them into the ground, God turned on the faucets from on high to give an added dab and what with tonight's lower temperature--around 80, I believe they will take hold readily enough. I set them out about three feet inside the five parterres where they make the converging point at the circle, placing one each in the potted parterres and three inside the larger parterre so that when they attain their full growth of about 6 to 8 feet, they will form another greater circle all around the center circle and should look quite pretty, I think, each with his set of yellow candles.

This morning about 6:30 when I took a basket of fresh things from the garden to deposit them on the back gallery across the fence, I noticed the air conditioners were going and the house appeared wrapped in slumber and so it turned out to be, the alarm clock having been set for 6 had subsequently had its silencer pressed down and the household snoozed until nearly 7:30 which was certainly better sense than the day before. Tonight, in spite of the sprinkle, J. H. came to the big house with the clerk, neither bothering with coat or parasol and I thought the patient seemed in a happy frame of mind.

It just occurs to me that with this memo going forward on the there will be a day elapse on the 4th when there will be no mail. I hold the thought that all news may be good news by the time the mail on the 5th goes forward.....

15584

15584

Wednesday, July 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Last night's half inch of rain cooled thing off pleasantly. There were a few gusts of wind that blew down trees in the Bermuda section around 4:30 p.m. yesterday. The trees carried high pow down with them and this was of particular interest to Beth Cloutier who was in the midst of an afternoon party. I suppose she had an ample supply of candles to light the guests but candle power is of dubious assistance for air conditioners, incense and so on. Today was fair in the 60-90 range and it is pleasantly cool again tonight.

I talked with Natalie's daughter tonight. She said her mother had been to school every day this week but, because of the "slowing down medicine" she appeared tired and depressed and, of course, such a medicine usually does have a tendency to depress one's spirits.

The daughter said that she believed her mother was alone tonight and was sure she would be delighted if I called her. I did not, however, for I think it better if a person is alone and probably responding to sedation, even though mild, one is better if allowed to respond to impulses for sleep when things are quiet.

The daughter had much to say about her own plans for August which makes me tired to think about. I am not sure of the dates but they are jamed up for the month of August. I believe it is on August 5th her brother is to be married and Ann will be present, of course, with several members of the family, the wedding to take place in south Louisiana, a couple hundred miles or so from this area. That should be a fairly full day in itself, what with all the festivities attendant upon such doings. Ann and her husband and what other members of the family attending plan to return home that night and be up early the next morning to head out by bus, --private for Chicago via St. Louis, etc., and, after the convention --and nobody knows how long or short that may be, they plan to head out for a whiz around Canada, Niagara Falls and Heaven know where all. It all sounds too wacky for words but obviously like the squirrel, people, too, must chase madly in a revolving wheel, even if they aren't going anywhere in particular.



15585

15585

I heard an extraordinary tale out of Dallas, coming from a relative of a Hatchitoches resident who imparted it to me today. The Dallas lady lives alone in a house and goes to business every morning, traveling by bus into the heart of the city. The other morning after locking her front door and coming down the steps, she was appealed to by a lady rushing up from the street, explaining that she simply had to make use of the bathroom for a moment. The departing lady explained she was afraid she might miss her bus if she went back into the house but the lady's appeal was so pitiful, explaining she would only be a moment, that she went back, opened the door, pointing out where the bathroom was remained on the gallery awaiting the patient's return. But the visitor not return right away and quite by chance an insurance investigator passed that way and the house owner, fearing the woman might have died, asked the investigator who chanced to be armed, to step inside to see if things were awry. The investigator went directly to the bathroom and on opening the door, discovered not a woman but a naked man standing the wig and women's apparel he had been wearing strewn on the floor and the masquerader intent of grabbing the person he thought would be the lady intruder carted off to the police station. That's all there is to the story but I found it sufficiently odd to relate.

Mrs. Walker called tonight about 10:30, having arrived during the day in Hatchitoches with her brother-in-law and his wife from Florida. She reported having had a fine trip and having found a pretty house of ten rooms within walking distance of her school which is not in Leesburg but some 5 miles from that place, which seems to be somewhere in the Orlando and Winter Park area. She says she plans to move within a month, sending her own and her mother's furniture ahead so it will be there when she and her mother arrive. She ran through a list of the teachers in the school and I found it interesting that not one of them seemed to be from the South, -- Wisconsin, Ohio, Nebraska and so on, seeming to remind that Florida has often been said to be populated, even as California, by people from other parts of the country.

On the home front, the merchant-planter, incredibly enough, was said to be contemplating flying to Boston on Saturday to attend some meeting or other. I am naturally holding the thought that relaxation at home may triumph over pulse for such chasing about.....

15586

15586

Thursday, July 4th, 1968.

Memorandum:

The prettiest weather I can remember for a 4th of July. It was in the cool 60's last night and never got above the mild 80's today under a cloudless sky with the dazzling sunshine doing nothing to push the thermometer too high while a tempering breeze made things seem dry enough in a humidity measuring only 45.

To my surprise, nobody on the plantation worked today. Usually one or another person does but today everybody rested. I was fiddling around on the front gallery sometime between 6 and 7 this morning when Lloyd Wentk suddenly appeared. He said the cook had come to give breakfast and so he and I went over to the big house where Doreatha had things ready. Lloyd and I ate leisurely and Doreatha served me a second cup of chocolate and departed for the day.

It is said two of the local honkeytonks are vying with each other for customers, the one up the road serving barbecued chicken, the one across the bridge dishing out pork. I imagine watermelon might lure more customers but the full surge of watermelon of local production will be delayed for another week or two when prices will start tumbling from \$1.50 down to about three melons for a dollar, especially when the trucks begin dispensing them on the highways outside of town.

Where all the road-runners may have been, I cannot imagine. Perhaps they were road running so fast they never could slow down fast enough to pause here. At least I never saw any, in pleasant contrast to some years when too many pilgrims and too many members of the family were milling about. And mention of the family reminds me to mention that Shreveport did not put in an appearance. I might have inquired of Lloyd as to what his mama might be up to but it seemed better simply to "let sleeping dogs lie".



38221

15587

Lloyd and I dined across the fence, after which Celeste went to town for cards, Lloyd returning home sometime during the afternoon. That was the glorious 4th and I enjoyed every quiet minute of it.

I. S. Willard 'phoned this evening to ask me about the names of some of the estates of the Orleanist families in ile de France in the 18th and 19th centuries. She continues gathering data on 18th century Hatchitoches people, tying them in with distinguished European branches of the families who never made it to Louisiana. She chatted a little about town society, mentioning having talked with James yesterday or today. He reported Kay was sleeping at the time and doing just fine. She also mentioned something about the Carver girls and something about Ada Jack Carver doing some entertaining at her Minden home but said nothing of Ada's offspring, David Snell.

The big doings at Yucca today was the birth of two sets of wrens. As I recall, this double hatching took place once before on the same day, one wren having her nest in a gourd suspended from the eaves of the front gallery, just a couple of away from another wren bringing forth her brood at just about the same time.

The black cats are quite happy about the whole business and seem to be impatient about the little ones coming to share their breakfast and supper with them. This year, however, I shall have to give thought to the little ones, what with Goldie Hunter spending most of his time on the gallery with Tom and Tomtom and, like Clementine Hunter, Goldie is 't going to miss a trick and, unless I am mistaken, Goldie might well get the notion that little wrens are more morsels of food than foster children to be cared for in the manner the black twins do. Well, we shall eventually see assigning Goldie to a restricted range until the baby wrens have had an opportunity to learn the way of yellow rather than black cats.

I understand Doetsie Baby, not liking Ohio, is back in Shreveport and perhaps that is why we weren't honored with a visitation from the ladies in that quarter. In any event, it was a quiet 4th and a pleasant one and I hold the thought it may have been the same at Lyme.....

38221

15588

Friday, July 5th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Ideal summer weather continues, sort of 60-ish by night and in the upper 80's to 90 by day, with the skies cloudless and humidity down.

And then, as thought to set a seal of perfection on such a beautiful day came Wednesday's letter from Lyme, a whole bundle of sunbeams compressed within the envelope.

And so Miss Nelson is indeed a lady. How remarkable you should have discovered the page with illustration about her and how kind of our mutual friend to share this page with us. I feel I should return it with this memo but I shall keep it over the weekend at least for I want to glance at it again in more favorable light. Quite by chance I was sending La Nelson a letter by the same post that brought the clipping about her. I shall be happy to refer to it in a subsequent message to California.

I can well imagine the hurly-burly obtaining on the home front just before the prolonged weekend and again little Miss Lee proves her nobility in somehow, --I know not how, --found time for correspondence.

It is good to have news concerning plans for the holiday and the natal day observations and I'm glad to have glimpses of the setting for the outing and for particulars regarding other vacationists. I hold the thought that the weather may have been as ideal around the greater Lyme area as it was down this way.

There were two or three letters in today's post that I shall have to go into on the morrow. All the secretaries, freed from school, are busy making hay and understandably enough, few of them have time for reading anything at the close of such busy days. Fortunately one appeared before other interruptions came into view and so I had the pleasure of reading but one letter which was the only important one, and the rest may be gone into on the morrow.



88221

15589

From a passing pilgrim, I did have news of Dr. Derron, the pilgrim having come here directly from a visit to Briarwood. Carrie is said to give the impression of great frailty and when asked her present weight, declined to divulge. She is said to have done some sputtering about Claitor being unable to get any kind of a date as to when Carrie's drawings of birds, formerly running serially in the Shreveport Times, will be issued by the Baton Rouge publisher. James told me the other day that after unending porrding, he had secured from Claitor the promise that he would publish the Jallon story but, as in the case of the Shadows of Old New Orleans, since no date can be secured, such a promise doesn't mean much if, indeed, anything.

From time out of mind, it has always been Carrie's custom to walk her guests through the growing things around and about the Briarwood establishment but she didn't go outside at this particular visit, leading the pilgrim to assume that she didn't feel up to it. I must try to get a letter off to her in tomorrow mail for although I haven't anything in particular to say, I may perhaps think up something about current floral doings that will divert her.

James mentioned the other day when he was here that Kay had said she was writing me a note, inviting me to dine at 209 South Williams but it hasn't come to hand as yet. I thought of her this noon when I heard on the radio that George Wallace will be in Shreveport on August first for a testimonial dinner and a rally and I assume Studie will scarcely let Kay miss that. I am told there were two dinners for Wallace in Baton Rouge which the two ladies plus la Crabtree attended, one dinner priced at \$25. a plate, the other at \$4,000. a plate. Which plates the girls selected, I wouldn't know, --possibly both. I am forever being surprised that people having that sort of money should be taken in by that sort of cheap politician. I have heard it said, however, that the easiest people to be taken for a ride are the bankers, not by any means that bankers are all fools but simply because many dealers in money become so hypnotized by the thought of piling up more wealth that they are right up in front when it comes to buying "gold" bricks.

Dootsie-Baby suddenly appeared at noon with a soldier from Camp Polk and, happily, disappeared again right away.

The merchant-planter is scurrying around at a great rate coming to the big house for supper both last night and tonight, night before last and tonight and so things spin.....

15590

15590

Sunday, July 7th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Our perfect weather continues, low humidity, thermometer ranging from the 60's to the 90's with fair skies and with an especially big round moon tonight.

Melma and John made a round on Saturday afternoon. I had called them in the morning to report on the progress of the opening crepe myrtles which are putting on a distinctly different show this season in that not all of the trees bearing the red blossom, so handsome in the Ramsey picture, are coming out at the same time so that one must compromise by clicking the camera somewhere between the time when the early big ones are beginning to droop a little and before the others have unopened to their fullest.

I stressed the point that they should arrive not later than 1:30 if they hoped to have the sunshine on both the west and east sides of the approaches to the African House. Like other professional people I have known who maintain appointments right on the dot in most of their dealings, they are scandalously late in their social appointments. And so, by the time they arrived an hour late, the sun had moved along and the west side --left hand side approaching the African House, --was already in shadow. The shot they got of the front of Ghana were perfect as to lighting for the afternoon sun shines there until after 4 o'clock when shadows of a pecan tree intervenes.

By a d b of leger-de-main, I played a little trick on them which provided us all with childish delight. When they arrived at Yucca, they were bearing a hamper full of food which we proceeded to empty right there, both of them taking things out as I carted the things to the icebox. When it was empty they proceeded to prospect for the most like shots of color in the garden while for a few minutes I remained at Yucca to attend to one or two little matters after which I joined them in the gardens. When the photographing was finished, we returned to Yucca for cokes and when it was time to leave and John stepped out on the gallery to pick up the hamper, he couldn't raise it from the bench at the first grasp for, lo! it seems that somehow the thing had become wedged out with



12220

15591

all kinds of freshly plucked vegetables gathered in the morning and kept sequestered in a cool spot until it was possible to ease them into the hamper when they weren't too

On Friday night I was reminded of that ancient observation: It isn't so much what one does as the way it is done that really matters. Mrs. Walker phoned rather late, in one breath asking me what I wanted to do with the column since she would find it impossible or at least impracticable to handle it from Florida and wondering if, as Ora had once remarked to her when the Enterprise was sold, that she would be glad to handle it. Of course much water has flowed over the dam since then and there were several points, most important of which was health to be considered at this late date. She said she planned to see Ora within a day or two and, if I didn't mind, she would take up the matter with her. I tried to establish contact with Ora on Saturday but without success. How things will turn in that direction remains to be seen. And so, if I may coin a phrase, we shall see what we shall see.

On Saturday afternoon, the Hunter pictures painted for Madam Nelson were half hidden behind the two chest of draws in the living room, slowly, very slowly drying. A year or so ago when trying to keep them out from under foot, I had placed some damp canvases beneath the bed when Sister blew in with her dog, the latter gumming up the pictures when he ploughed through under the bed. This time I thought this batch of canvases were safe but I was mistaken. Some of the Peterson tribe in a camp across the river brought some New Orleans people and while I was busy directing attention to the Grandpere portrait, one of the men in the group catching sight of the half concealed pictures and before I could put a foot down had grabbed at a couple and smeared them wonderfully. He explained he merely wanted to see what they were and hadn't realized they were wet.

Across the fence thing rock along much as usual, neither party appearing too happy.

As for this side of the fence, the black cats have just had a bowl of milk and are waiting for me on the doorstep, thinking, and they are correct, that it is about time for us to take a turn in the moonlight at Ghana.....

12221

15592

Monday, July 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with minor sprinkles this morning, continued cloudy all day with both humidity and temperature in the 80's.

Beth, --Mrs. C. Vernon Cloutier, called Celeste early this morning to get my phone number. She never did call back, so far as I know, but she did call Celeste again to say she would be dropping in this afternoon which she did while I was at supper. She wants to bring some "very important" ladies on Wednesday afternoon, Mesdames Cook, Moreland and Bleuer, all Shreveport widow ladies and I believe la Bleuer has been here before with Blythe.

Beth was bubbling over with delight over the wedding reception on Saturday night which she attended and which Celeste did not. It was Barbara Cohen, niece of Dorothy Cohen, from the plantation just below here on the way to Maganolia. I believe Barbara is a next year at L. S. U.

The wedding was very spiffy so far as fine feathers go. This morning Carmen was going a mile a minute about it, she having got all her information from Her Chaplain who attended and who, as always, gave unending details. Somebody else reported the doings I can't seem to remember, --oh, yes, I. S. Willard and then at supper time, Beth was spilling the details at a great rate. ....interruption.....

What made the wedding exceptional, was not the wedding itself which was said to be darling, but the reception that followed at the Country Club. Champagne, of course, flowed which isn't news but what was different was the fact that first the groom and then the father of the groom, were tossed into the swimming pool. Beth thought it was the funniest thing she had ever seen, Carmen thought it disgusting, I. S. Willard thought it errrrrr, ahhhhhhhh, ahhhhhhhh well, errrrrrrrrrr shocking and I thought it tragic. Fortunately the groom succeeded in getting his driver's license and other papers from being ruined by the water and the father of the groom, a gentleman from Illinois, climbed out of the pool, drove back to his motel and changed and returned for the balance of the festivities and that was that.



15593

The interruption noted above was Kay calling to invite me for luncheon at 209 on Thursday. Yes.

R tuning to Beth, she said she wanted to consult me on the matter of the Prudhomme family tree. She said there was a lady in Bunkie who had indicated that Heritage might possibly put it in print and Beth wanted my opinion. Naturally, without telling her I was acquainted with Mrs. Eakin, I said I thought it very important to get such a document into print as soon as possible. Needless to say, I shall communicate with Mrs. Eakin tonight, advising her to "strike while the iron is hot". From various quarters I have been given to understand that the tree is remarkably complete in the main stem. I have been years since I last saw it and at that time I understood it was about half done but now it is said to be full grown. What is important for the Quarterly is the fact that it will be presenting and, of course, preserving a document of great worth, not only for historians and members of the family but for endless relations scattered to the four corners of the globe. Telephone company called this afternoon to say that another subscriber is being added to the present party line. The Delphin signal is one long ring, mine is two long rings and the new subscriber will be one long and one short ring. Up to the present time, there has been no ring except their own for the people across the fence. Whether the new signal, one long and one short, will sound on their bell, I know not. I asked the 'phone company the name of the new subscriber. They said it is J. C. Mo who, as it happens, is my barber. I am counting on some irritation value in this new hook-up so far as the Delphins are concerned for both the Delphins and the Moodies have half a dozen teen-agers and the Delphin and Moody residences are next to each other. Up until now, the Delphin teen-agers have been wearing me out by their constant use of the 'phone but now I am counting on the Delphin and Moody young folks to wear out each other.

So things turn in the land of ducked grooms and papas of ducked grooms and I am all in favor of less dampness in matrimonial matters.....

15594

Tuesday, July 9th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Sultry all morning with clouds giving way to sunshine before noon. At 5 o'clock this afternoon there was much thunder in the direction of Hatchitoches where there was rain, none of which came this far down the river but a lovely cool flow of air began making things so comfortable that I am really impatient to fold up my beard just for the pleasure of feeling the necessity of pulling a sheet over me but that will have to come a little later after I have taken a turn at Ghana with Tom and Tomtom by the light of a glorious moon.

Today is Country Club day for the ladies and so J. H. dined at the big house with the clerk and me. There were lots of fresh vegetable including stuffed peppers of which I am exceedingly fond.

Ezra wasn't feeling well last night and so Doreatha hadn't slept much and this afternoon she planned to take him to the doctor's. Like other people we know, Ezra goes to the doctor when he isn't feeling well and comes back to pay not the slightest heed to recommendations the doctor makes regarding food.

I am glad the merchant-planter doesn't drink for when I stop to survey various other ailing fiends, it seems to me so many of them tend to take to the bottle when not feeling well, a practice that I should never think of following since I cannot imagine alcohol and illness going together but apparently it does for lots of people.

Mrs. Walker called to say she had an appointment with Ora for Thursday. I am hoping to establish a contact with Ora prior to that date although as yet I have been unsuccessful in trying to reach her.

It occurs to me just now that a couple or three weeks ago, -- whenever it was -- I talked with Ora before her recent indisposition, she rather surprised me by asking me what I thought about somebody attempting a biography of one Lyle Saxon. I told her somebody should and she suggested we undertake one together. At the time I suggested she attempt the writing and I would make an effort to supply material. I am surprised somebody



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hasn't tried a hand at doing just that but if anyone has, it is possible the person has encountered so many blankspaces in casting about for material that the effort has been given up before anything was undertaken. The few people I have known who might have been capable of managing the material haven't been interested in the subject. That clipping from the Baton Rouge paper forwarded two or three weeks ago contained nothing of any interest and the few sentences about Lyle having been born on a Louisiana plantation, of course, isn't true. One thing in Ora's favor would be her access to many of his writings either at Northwestern but even more especially through access from Library loans from State and national repositories.

Lyle, of course, was a very complex personality and I assume it requires a complex personality to understand him. Most of the people who really knew him well are gone with the exception of Joe Gilmore and one or two others. Hosts of people would declare they knew him well because they had known him for years, -- such as Essie Mae Culver, who, actually, while being thrown with him frequently over a period of years, really didn't know him at all.

Of course there is the matter of Ora's health and the admonition from the lady doctor that she slow down but it remains to be seen if she will follow that dictum any more than other people we know who definitely will pay no attention.

I don't know if I mentioned it or not in yesterday's memo but it struck me, -- in the department of plants -- that I run the risk of repeating myself. Ora's sister-in-law, Beth is supposed to be top knotch in floral matters, everything from planting to flower arrangement. When here yesterday, she pointed to the elephant ears, speculating why it is that although she has raised them for years, the leaf measurement of hers never ar ed those of the Yucca ones in measurement, asking me why I thought this was and remarking that it was a pity elephant ears never have any flowers. How the fact that they do, -- at least some of them, do have flowers somehow has eluded her, and I am sure she never had seen one, for, if she had, she never could have forgotten its long spindley, tube-like golden grace. She seemed doubtful when I told her the local ones usually bloom every year and to relief her mind of doubts about it, I told her I would phone her along the latter part of next month and she could come and see for herself. She said it didn't matter what she was doing when I called, she would drop everything and come a-umpin'. Thus it would appear pertinent facts sometimes do escape the experts and I'm counting on the elephant ears to put on an impressive show this season just for her education.....

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Wednesday, July 10th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 70 to mid 90 range.

There were a few letters in today's post but none of them looked as though interest might be found within and so I regretted not at all that pilgrims and secretaries got sufficiently tangled up to prevent exploration of any communications at all and for once I found no excuse to regret the mix-up of business and pleasure since the business held little promise of interest and the pleasure was more or less of the humdrum nature that usually accompanies visitors with little on their minds and not much other than time on their hands.

The best thing I can say about Beth's three ladies was that almost as soon as Beth had presented them, she herself got lost Later when I presented her guests to Celeste who had planned to entertain them after their tour when something by way of cold drinks was really in order, Beth popped up, explaining that she had become so fascinated by the view from a bench under the big oak that she had remained there until just a few minutes before we arrived at Celeste's where she had preceded us. As we were entering the side gate, Beth was busy asking me if she could have various plants she was noting as she entered and before leaving his work just before supper time, Andy was rattling off all the things "that big lady" had asked him to see about getting for her. I think it isn't so much that she really wants various types of plants she doesn't already have but more because she apparently is afflicted with an impulse to convince herself that every visit is a success if she can round up something or other and as many different things as possible to carry away with her. The Lord knows there is a plethora of moveable plants around and about and I am always glad to share them with anyone but I do find it amusing that she never does put in an appearance that she doesn't being asking for first one thing and then another to take with her. On Monday night she wanted periwinkle and water Hyacinths, today it was ivy, Solomon's seal and Devil lilies and the odd part in all this doings that in many instances, she herself knows perfectly well that July is not the time to move many of her selections with any hope of having the things survive. But that is la Beauffort all over.



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Mrs. Wilker called about 10 tonight, asking if I thought she might finish the final chapter of the George Painter biography of Proust. I said I doubted it since the teen-agers seemed to have kept the party line pretty busy all evening and I doubted if there would be much peace in literary pursuits tonight. When receivers keep going up, I find it distracting since one has no means of knowing if the person picking up the instrument is a teen-ager or the people across the fence who may or may not behave even as the young folks. We got only a paragraph and the clicking began and I suggested we try the Painter thing on a quieter night. The line was accordingly broken and it turned out that the "clickers" were indeed the teen-agers and now, two hours later, they are still going strong. That's the trouble with Daylight Savings, nobody, --not even the teen-agers, ever seem to go to bed.

Last night Ezra and Doreatha headed out for Houston where their sons want Ezra to consult a doctor in whom they have great faith. When they got about half way there, their car began giving them difficulty and so they turned around and came home, traveling about the same distance that, had they kept going, would have landed them at their original destination. And so the cook was on the job from breakfast until noon, and after that she and Ezra started out again and, I trust, have reached their destination long ere now.

I dined by myself at Yucca, the resistance piece being a delicious bowl of cream or cottage cheese into which I had cut some tomato, bell pepper, cucumber, onion, etc., during the morning and had left to chill in the icebox for the balance of the day when, on getting ready to attack it, I added a dab of dressing made up primarily of cold mushroom soup, in semi-solid form to which a bit of Rajah sauce had been added and it was all quite yum-yum.

A nice cool melon is awaiting my attention in the icebox but it may have to await my appearance in that quarter until tomorrow night, what with the salads having already introduced so many pleasant if not pleasing curves. Everybody is talking about figs these days but the local ones are of varieties that seem to be coming into perfection a little later than usual this year and so the bluejays, peacocks and I shall not start contending for them for another week at least. And this happy note on edibles must be it for tonight.....

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Thursday, July 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair as between the mid 70's to the mid 90's and rather high humidity.

After a fairly busy morning, I ran in to town about 11:30, chatted for a few minutes with the Registers at 406, immediately after which Kay, already attractively gowned, decided she should take a nap before dinner whereupon she retired while James and I ran on into town, that is to say across the river into the business section where I wanted to pick up some gold fish for the big sugar pots on the back gallery and in the avant-cour. I don't know what had happened to the ones on the back gallery but the ones in the avant-cour must have slipped over the lip of the cauldron during the torrential rains this Spring. James is forever laughing about the scant amount of stock Hatchitoches stores carry. There was a case in point awaiting us at the seed store where one may usually find several tanks of fish but when the tanks were all empty and the clerk told us the store was expecting a delivery of a fresh stock of gold fish any moment. It was too hot to wait and so we purchased all the store still possessed to the amount of exactly three.

I jumped croaked when I got back into the car. The sun was so hot and my pants so thin that for once I knew I would always appreciate the better that old phrase, "like a chicken on a hot griddle".

We returned to 406 around 1 o'clock and found Kay up again and we all drove over to 209 South where Mrs. Crabtree was bubbling over with hospitality. The Registers and I had a half hour's chat before dinner and the dinner was excellent, --a chilled soup, milk or white sauce base with a very elusive mint flavor, especially delightful after the hot seat episode although both 406 and 209 South are heavily air-conditioned. "Welcome to Colorado" was James' greeting when I entered indicating the high Rocky chilliness inside.

There was a wonderful shrimp something or other on rice, some nut-orange bread, an over-sized chilled vegetable salad, some kind of chocolate desert or dessert that looked like ice cream but wasn't, ice tea, of course along side the shrimp and salad demi-tasse at the end and it was all delectable and pleasant.

James brought me home after half an hour's chat following coffee that was my adventurous day in town.



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James had mentioned the other day that he had received a letter from Claitor stating that the Jallon book was already in the works, the type being set and so on. He was accordingly somewhat taken aback on Tuesday when a package arrived from Claitor with a covering letter which stated that the Jallon manuscript was being returned and as the presses were being moved to another location in Baton Rouge, the Jallon book would not be printed. James said he assumed he could hold Claitor to the letter but would let Claitor drop and contact somebody else for doing the book.

I was glad to hear Ora's voice tonight. She called so say she had had a conference with Mrs. Walker about handling the column and asked me if I should care to run through two or three she had brought with her from her conference. Her voice sounded like its normal self which, of course, delighted me. She said she was going to skip up to Shreveport tomorrow to see Dr. Hollobeck, an old friend who had attended her on previous occasions. She said the lady doctor had recommended the consultation with the Shreveport specialist primarily to set Ora's mind at rest.

I don't know how all this switch of agents is going to pan out but I have always found it very pleasant working with Ora on any project and it seems to me we may be able to run through the impending one with satisfaction all around. She said Mrs. Walker seemed all aglow at the prospect of going to Florida. Ora said that she thinks the teaching job Mrs. Walker is undertaking is going to be filled with more problems than that lady realizes but she can solve them as they come along without getting into a stew of uncertainty before she tried her hand at it.

What I shall try to do is to keep at least a month's of columns done in advance that she may have time to glance through for corrections well in advance of publication date, giving her a feeling of freedom when demands for trips arise, calling her out of

And now I must get busy and knock off a few letters before call it a day. The thermometer on the bank in Hatchietches today registered 110 when we passed by the building on our way for goldfish but, fortunately, there is a cooling breeze tonight.....

P.S. As I started making the envelope for this memo, Frances Rand Jack call from Shreveport, asking if she might pick me up tomorrow morning and drive down to Alexandria to see Blythe. I am tied up for tomorrow but am glad to have news that Blythe is getting along with a walker and taking a few steps daily at the hospital

15600

Friday, July 12th, 1968.

# Memorandum:

Lots of weather with a sultry, humid, semi-sunny morning with the thermometer around the upper 90's by 10 o'clock. Between 3 and 4 o'clock this afternoon, it rained three and eight tenths inches which we scarcely need but got it is cooler tonight but not for long since no cold front is about and the rain was one of those showers running in streaks. I don't know if it rained at all in town. It rained no a drop 6 or 8 miles down Cane River in the direction of Derry and Cloutierville

Dore and Ezra are still in Houston and so we dined across the fence this noon, -- J. H., the clerk, an L. S. U. pecan man and Leston. Celeste joined us when we were half through, she having got lost at the beauty salon in town this morning where she had gone to get a hair-do. She and J. H. leave tomorrow for Boston, traveling by plane.

Last evening I had a 'phone call from Mrs. Eakin regarding the Prudhomme family tree and a request that more Melrose pictures in color might be taken. I urged immediate grasping for the Prudhomme thing and said that now is the time for picture taking on ye olde plantation since the lains have kept vegetation crisp and green and the crepe myrtles are blooming great guns.

Today came a list of color slides of the Melrose scene from Louisiana Heritage. I did not get an opportunity to turn through it but assume it details the various slides, possibly available in a set. If the price list was given, the secretary didn't mention it. I assume the latest offering is merely an elaboration of the slides numbering half a dozen or so which little Miss Lee may have received a while back about the time the disc for auntie was forwarded to Lyme.



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As I turned this page, la Millspaugh 'phoned for a bit of gossiping. She said she had come down to the artist's house about 5 o'clock this afternoon and Miss Hunter's grandson had to wade out to her car to bring the pictures to her. The water surrounded the artist's house but there had been no rain up the road at all.

I guess the primary reason for her call was to report that a mulatto lady had been in the store today, expressing grief over the removal of the altar from the Church of the Children of Strangers. The lady of color said she had heard Mrs. Henry was going to have the altar. I can't imagine any of that as being true although la Millspaugh said that many Catholic Churches are now removing their altars, placing a table near the rail and the priest addresses his Masses while facing the congregation rather than facing the altar as was the custom. I am so far behind in this matter of new tucks being taken in old Catholic skirt lines that I am quite in the dark as to this latest bit of news from across the river. The mulatto lady told la Millspaugh that the communicants at the Le Brevelle Church protested the removal of the altar but Father Fredericks, the man of God in charge, didn't like the protests and slammed his prayer book down hard.

The enclosures speak for themselves but with scant interest. I must say I was slightly taken aback by the note from Kay Courrege, daughter of Celeste's former sister-in-law, Betty Lane Regard Courrege. Perhaps I didn't grasp the note very well because of the quality of the reading of it. At first when thanks was expressed for the butterfly lily blossoms, I couldn't imagine what was meant since the butterfly lilies haven't blossomed as yet. Then there was the reference to the tulip tree blossoms and the tulip bloomed months back. Then it finally dawned on me that the young lady must be referring to columns from over the years that she had been reading and she was thanking me for having written on various topics.

Tom and Tentom are sitting patiently on the doorstep, keeping the gaze turned on me as patiently they wait for me to join them in a stroll under the elegant full moon. They perhaps haven't discovered the Chan garden is under water. But we shall walk in the direction of higher ground and we shall all enjoy our "constitutional" regardless and when we return, all three of us will have a dab of ice cream, don't you think so.....

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15602

Sunday, July 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Another inch of rain on Saturday afternoon. We really didn't need it. Today was cloudy with both humidity and temperature "hoovering" around 80.

We dined at 11 o'clock across the fence on Saturday so Celeste and J. H. could make it to Shreveport in ample time to catch their plane for Boston where they plan to spend a week.

Saturday's post was a little on the thin side but I was glad to learn from a letter penned by Kristan Nelson that her gallery is empty, all the pictures in her exhibition having been utterly sold out. She was writing regarding some Hunter canvases which I shall send along to her this week.

The best news of the weekend came this morning in a conversation with Ora. She had an appointment with her Shreveport specialist who told her she was doing nicely and would not have to interrupt any of her activities. That seems like a rather broad statement to give a patient who, like other patients we know, either don't know how to slow down or, if they do, haven't the slightest intention of doing so. But possibly the physician in Ora's case, knows his patient well enough to count on her using common sense about expending her energies.

Ora had told me a while back that the college provides her with a secretary who isn't much at some kind of paper work but is excellent at research. After she mentioned the other day that it is perhaps time to consider doing a biography on Lyle Saxon, it occurred to me that this is just where the secretary she had mentioned might be of great use in rounding up particulars for such a study. When I expressed that idea she subscribed to it heartily. I accordingly told her two or three facts of which she had never heard, all of which would be helpful in rounding up unknown material about Lyle. For example, like everyone else, she had never heard that Lyle had been born in the Cascade Mountains in the State of Washington in a community named, of all things, Saxon. I suggested her secretary immediately get busy digging up material about that community.

Then I told her about Lyle's grandmother, Elizabeth Lyle Saxon



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whose rare volumes might be dug up in some library as between Louisiana and the Congressional Library. Lyle always said his grandmother's writing had influenced his own writing considerably.

Then I told her about the article that appeared, probably in the 1930's, --in Collier's, I believe, the author being Hugh Saxon, the story about his son, Lyle, whom he had never seen. Ora thought the local college library had an index of all articles appearing along about that time. And so this information gave her a lift in that it quickened her interest in a subject on which she had been ruminating for some time and at the same time, it provided her with ample employment for her secretary. As I recall, Lyle was born in the 1890's and very few States, if, indeed, any, required birth registrations. It is most improbable that any region as remote as the Cascade Mountains of the State of Washington, did so. During his lifetime, Lyle found it simpler to say he was born in Baton Rouge and thereby avoid an endless rigamarole of explanations as to why his mother chanced to be so far from home base when in that early September day, --I guess it was the 4th, when the old stork dropped the blessed bundle into her lap. Now that he and all his immediate family are gone and a full length biography is in order, it would, I suppose, make no difference to anyone if the place of his birth should be mentioned although the fact that all the biographical material written about him would have to be altered to bring facts into line and that fact alone would cause quite a stir among scholars and bibliophiles the world around and, incidentally, focus attention in literary circles upon this new biography. I hadn't given this one phase about the matter much thought until now but it is obvious that a great many people whom Lyle knew are no longer available for particulars and perhaps it is just as well that I pass along to Ora as much of pertinence that for the moment reposes in my own memory about him and his friends.

I tried a new combination with cottage cheese today and like it. Early this morning I plucked a couple of average sized tomatoes, a bell pepper, a leaf of sage and a sprig of parsley. Cutting up the bell pepper fine and the tomatoes in little chunks I stirred them with the oil in a bowl, adding a modest sized can of mushroom soup, pushing the whole thing into the icebox which I am now on the point of raiding.....

15604

15604

Monday, July 15th, 1968.

Memorandum: Hot and humid. One result of this combination was the changing of my costume four times during the course of the day, having worked up a lather before breakfast and again by mid morning, followed by a like performance right after dinner and another before supper.

All the recent rains plus the heat and humidity has been a bumper crop of hay. One consequence of that has been great activity in the hayfields during the daylight hours, regardless of Daylight Savings. A natural sequence of this tendency to labor late was manifest this evening when the secretaries, worn out, I suppose, from laboring in the fields, were too exhausted to do other than collapse with coming darkness. Accordingly, nobody showed up for secretarial duties tonight and therefore all of today's in-coming mail lies snugly tucked away in the armchair awaiting the morrow when it is to be hoped the concentration on haying will be lessened a bit.

Ora 'phoned about 8:30 this evening. She had had another conference with Mrs. Walker today and they seem to have just about got the column business settled. There was also a column to be checked over, something under the title of Arms Registration. After that we talked a little about research on the Saxon study. It is premature to talk about illustrations for such a book but nevertheless, although I haven't mentioned it to Ora, I have begun giving thought to suitable material for inclusion. A distinctly peculiar thing about photographs of Lyle over the years are so different as to make it seem that some of them are not of Lyle at all but of entirely different and unrelated individuals. For instance, I remember the one that appeared on the front page of the New York Times Book Review, probably taken when



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Lyle was in his late 20's in which it would seem he had a black perruque and rather striking in its profusion whereas his hair, inclined toward the thin side and light, was the last feature one would notice in many another photograph. I believe I have a glossy print somewhere, taken in the garden of the Madison Street house in New Orleans when the host with several guests including Mr. and Mrs. John Steinbeck, are grouped in small chairs around a low metal garden table. I remember a snapshot in which Miss Cam., Lyle and Lestan appeared in the Melrose garden, at the sight of which Lyle dubbed it: "The Lame, the Halt and the Blind". As I recall, in that one, Miss Cam was leaning on Lestan's arm and Lyle was sporting a cane. For local places associated with such a biography, there are plenty of scenes of Yucca, of course, and I suppose one might even employ some of the interiors by Eddy Suydam that appeared in the Hastings House "Friends of Joe Gilmore". It occurred to me today how fortunate in the future for anyone attempting a sketch of Lestan to have the one hundred slides recently set forth by Louisiana Heritage.

Naturally I thought of little Miss Lee early this morning, wishing I might toss some nice fresh foodstuffs in her direction. I plucked only a couple of bushels of tomatoes although there were as many again which I should have gathered, to slow up the ripening process of the sun's rays. For dinner we had some sliced with sliced bell pepper rings, okra gumbo, beets and mustard greens, stuffed eggplant and tiny new Irish potatoes with an onion sauce and parsley --all from the Ghana Garden and obviously compiled to ruin my self-respecting waistline.

In the realm of reading machines, I have been missing mine. I believe the telephone company has had it for repairs for three weeks. Madam Breussard, incharge of the business office of the phone company in town, has been away on vacation but returns on the morrow. I shall make it a point to call her in the morning to see what magic wand she may wave. I shall write the library of Congress, suggesting a community reading machine be placed in all phone repair centers so such an instrument may be supplied a user when his own machine goes away for repairs.

It's with a happy feeling I glance in the direction of the armchair with the promise it holds in the correspondence section against a happy day on the morrow.....

15606

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Tuesday, July 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, hot and humid.

News this evening indicates the Boston vacation didn't last long, what with a phone to the store reported the travelers as being in New York. If "staying put" is part of an excuse for a rest period, this exercise in moving about doesn't seem to suggest much of restfulness about it.

This evening, finding myself in a lather because all the secretaries were whisked off on some sort of a frolic at the close of the working day in the field, I told myself that other people have to wait sometime for more than a couple of days for mail and that I shouldn't be getting all hot and bothered because I had to wait for a couple of days to get into my own incoming mail.

There were two or three clippings in the morning's post from Carmen. I am enclosing them herewith although I doubt if they are of any particular interest.

There was a quarter of an hour of mix-up on the telephone this morning. I did hear an operator say that L. S. U. wanted to speak to me. Then all connection was cut. Then there was a series of bell ringing and no responses but finally and at long last I heard Professor Eakin's voice, the line cleared and a conversation ensued. The up-shot of the talk was that there will be a visit on Friday afternoon. One thing desired is general layout for some forth-coming issue of the Quarterly. There will be photographers along to take more pictures. Then there will be a trip to Beaufort to see about rounding up Beth's Prudhomme family tree. I recommended that the family tree be photographed immediately since it really is a very valuable record and one that, I believe, is thoroughly correct, not to mention the fact that it is very improbable that anybody capable of doing such a huge batch of difficult research is likely to attempt such a thing again in generations. When one pauses to realize that with the passage of each generation, it becomes more and more difficult to re-capture fading generations that have gone before and assemble them in their proper chronological progression, especially in families where in successive generations identical names are forever re-appearing, it is really



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a document of inestimable value if, as rarely happens, such a document is correctly assembled.

It is obvious to me that when Heritage first heard about the possibility of acquiring the tree, they sensed little if they sensed at all the appreciation of its worth and I am glad that possession of it seems to be coming closer to a reality and that possibly by the end of this week it may actually come to hand.

Having worked mightily over assembling the thing, Beth naturally felt mighty proud of her job but, like so many people of like mind, having achieved it, she clutched it to her bosom and wouldn't let anybody see it, that is to say, anybody who was searching for information about relationships which would be so valuable. Beth brought it down here once a long time ago, yards and yards of paper which she rolled out on the floor, proceeding to do much fancy footwork in tracing how one branch of the family hitched on to the main trunk of the tree and how the various other branches got interlocked, etc., etc. As a magnanimous gesture, she told me that if I ever wanted to trace the relationship of one prominent person to anyone in the family, she would let me look at the thing but that she didn't intend to let anybody else see it. How it is that she suddenly decided to let Heritage have the whole thing, I cannot imagine unless, perhaps, she gradually realized that tucked away in a chest at Beaufort, it wasn't adding any immediate glory to herself and so thought she might get a flash of praise for her labors if she could find somebody who would appreciate it enough to get it into print. If Heritage can photograph the whole thing, there will at least be a copy of the original in case the original should be lost and if Heritage can find the means to publish the thing, it will represent an invaluable documentary of early Louisiana history and at the same time provide genealogists a staff of considerable worth. It is heartening to see that this may be achieved at long last, assuming that the Friday effort proves fruitful.

I learned from Camen today that "Bootsie" Gay is in Natchitoches, the same "Bootsie" who once operated the Candle Shop in the Vieux Carre in New Orleans. She has been living in Denver for a few years and I am holding the thought she may return to Colorado where her dizzy career might occasion less havoc in Colorado altitudes than in the Delta flat lands.....

15608

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Wednesday, July 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair, hot and humid with last night's low at 76 and today's high at 98.

"Patience on a tombstone, smiling at grief" got around to do the mail today. Not one secretary put in an appearance but half a dozen of them but fortunately not at the same time and there was plenty of work for them all.

It goes without saying I was first concerned with the Friday letter from Lyme and all the interesting things it contained. I am especially glad to have news regarding the two patients or prospective patients mentioned. It will be satisfying to learn that the one making such a surprising comeback succeeds without further delay in settling into the home supposedly scheduled for him. As for the other prospective patient, I can understand how the physician might feel the operation could be delayed without affecting her health but it seems to me that it is very important that the thought of having to go through any sort of a thing as awaits her would call for an operation as quickly as possible just for the sheer peace of mind in realizing that that matter was over and out of the way. I find it interesting that at the present time, I suppose it has been so for a number of years, the heart specialists all agree that ample exercise, especially walking is of paramount importance to the person with a heart problem. I read something or other a while back by Paul Dudley White who explained what I had not understood before, to wit, that it is the moving backward and forward of the thighs that does so much by way of proper exercise for the heart. I had never thought of the thighs as having much to do with the heart but when I stopped to notice men walking that the thigh with each stride does seem to exercise the torso and, so, of course, the entire complicated set of muscles and things implicit therein.

Wasn't it odd that the package addressed to Auntie failed to reach her. I am holding the thought that there was nothing within the package other than the disc and the slides for they can be so readily replaced. Just let me know when you want these companion pieces forwarded to little Miss Lee and



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will go forward immediately. I hesitate about sending them before receiving instructions however, since I assume you would prefer to await hearing from her after she has had an opportunity to check at her local post office.

It was so thoughtful of little Miss Lee to have mentioned several points she had read in the Northrup book, all of which was quite illuminating to me for, oddly enough, although I offered to set down whatever was written me about it so it would appear in a column, I don't recall any mention ever having been made about the trip from Saratoga Springs to Richmond. Somehow I labored under the impression that Northrup had been taken into custody in New York and shipped off to New Orleans but it may be that I did not read the correspondence carefully that touched on this part of the story. It certainly would be interesting if one had the time to drive down to Alexandria just below there to visit some of the places Northrup mentions for it would undoubtedly make the whole story take on that much more of vitality as it always seems to do when one is acquainted with places mention in any story.

If I can lay hands on it, I shall enclose a note in today's post from Horace Rand. He is a five cent cigar but must be commended for the letter, whether ordered by his mother or induced by his own inclination. I shall respond by saying that when his mama gets back home, she will have plenty to attend to without bothering about mail but that so long as she remains in the hospital with time on her hands, I shall keep on dropping her a note every day if, indeed, he feels she isn't bored by too many messages from this bend of the river.

I had a very pleasant hour with a couple of young mulatto gentlemen from Los Angeles this afternoon. One of them is a Metoyer - LaCour descendant and for a few years attended the Children of Strangers Church before moving west. Somebody had sent him the Enterprise out there and for a number of years he had followed the column so that on his first visit to the Cane River country, he wanted to visit the plantation he had known from beyond the fence but had never laid eyes on what might come into view behind the bushes. He chanced to know the Nelson, Gallerie area and when I told him I was casting about for the address which I had but lacked anyone to read it to me, he asked if he might sit down at this machine and immediately banged off the address to perfection which I thought very kind of him but then, as we have remarked before, there really are so many nice people in this world if one only has the blessing of getting around to know them.....

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Thursday, July 18th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Hot and sultry thermometer "hovering" around 80 during last night and touching a hundred from mid day until 5:30 when an electric storm with an inch or more of rain cooled the air wonderfully, promising a pleasant night for sleeping.

The nicest thing about today was the arrival of the post from Lyme, bringing Tuesday's letter. Naturally I rejoiced on learning of the good news about the final settlement of the patient as of Wednesday. How grateful the people across the water must be on learning that such generous expenditure of kindness by former neighbors of the patient has succeeded so exceedingly well and I lift my hat to the zeal employed by little Miss Lee to carrying through this very important matter. Now, let us hope, all concerned may relax in satisfaction with a difficult job so well done.

I found the account of the natal day doings altogether delightful, the activities of the little ones, the gay streamer carrying its message of felicitations and all. I especially like the menu which sounded just grand and one's appetite must have been the keener in view of the surroundings in which the repast was served.

The vacationers who had supposedly been indulging in a "Boston rest and vacation" returned to home base in the middle of the afternoon. I haven't seen the lady as yet but the merchant-planter came to supper and lingered a little longer at table because of the heavy rain that broke while the meal was in progress. Having left here on Saturday noon, I suppose they reached Boston by Saturday evening. There were lots of trips around and about, --Cape Cod Harvard and Yale and, --to my surprise, West Point, a car having been rented in Boston with John Wenk of the Moon Project, doing the driving and one assumes Sunday and Monday must have been full of driving about since they reached New York on Tuesday, staying at some Hollywood Inn in the neighborhood of West 57th Street and 10th Avenue. I suppose the lady will have something to report about how Wednesday was spent in Manhattan and this morning John Wenk drove them to the Kennedy Air Port, the travelers flying to New Orleans and John driving the car back to Boston. Like all such trips in which they have indulged, it sounds more like an endurance test than anything else, leaving little more for one to do than wonder.



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My morning was quite busy and precisely at 12 noon, two Mormon gentlemen put in an appearance, Elder Myers who had been here before, bring Elder Brown, --California via Utah, with him. It seems they were here a week ago today when I was in town. They said they had come to take pictures. I took them at their word and went on to dine with some pecan men who had been invited.

When I returned to Yucca from the big house, the Mormons were still about and I invited them inside for a dab of refreshment and they remained until 2 o'clock.

After they had departed, other people came before I had so much as had a chance to cross the road to pick up some stuff at the store. I got rid of the last of them about half an hour before supper and took the opportunity to put a hose going on the butterfly lilies for little Miss Lee was right when she remarked in Tuesday's letter that butterfly lily time should be approaching. When I turned the hose on the lilies, the sun was blazing and little did I imagine that within half an hour, the clouds would have taken over and added all the moisture the lilies could possibly manage for tonight. But they like water and the extra drink they received will perhaps induce them to hurry along in making their initial bow for 1968.. It is impossible for me to guess just what day they will begin unfolding their loveliness but just for fun I am guessing that it will probably be the 22nd.

I. S. Willard called this evening. I mentioned I had been unsuccessful in trying to reach her by 'phone yesterday. She couldn't imagine why I had been unsuccessful as "I was at home all day". She went on to say that James had spent yesterday in Shreveport, something about a new air-conditioners for 406, and she went on to say that in response to an invitation from Kay, she had gone over to 406 to dine around 2 o'clock and to chat for a couple of hours, leading me to assume that that might be one reason why I did not succeed in reaching her on the 'phone.

She told me something I thought quite charming, a gesture on the part of some of her kinsmen in southern France. There were four in the family, Papa, mama and two girls around 11 and 12. That was until recently when an old stork passed over the property, dropping a blessed bundle. The engraved card announcing a baby boy added to the family menage, read:

"Monsieur and Madame Guillemaine

and  
Mademoiselle Eliza and Mademoiselle Antoinette  
have the honor to announce the arrival of  
Pierre so-and-so-Guillemaine  
on such and such a date.

I like the idea of the little girls being joined with their parents in announcing the glad tidings of a new man in the house.....

01321

15612

Friday, July 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

It is really extraordinary how today's weather duplicated yesterday's. Hot, humid and fair until we gathered at the supper table in the summer dining room when, even as last night, the heavens opened the the floods descended - three and a half inches and now later, the thunder continues rolling and the rains cascading into ears and the banana plants.

All day long things went along nicely enough but somehow with an odd twist to them. Quite unexpectedly my hair dresser appeared shortly before it was time for me to keep the rendezvous with my 9 o'clock coffee companion across the fence and thus receive a report about Boston and New York. And so I hurried the hairdresser and by dint of sprinkling, arrived at the magical hour right on time. Rosetta, the servant, reported that Celeste had gone to town to keep a 9 o'clock appointment with her hairdresser.

Mrs. Eakin 'phoned at 10 to ask if she and her son might come this afternoon, --an appointment had already been made before, but she wanted to inquire about how to get to Frau Cloutier's from her son, she thought could take some extra shots and repeat some former ones while she was at Beaufort.

James 'phoned from the artist's house at 10:15, asking if I needed a couple of fine Hunter canvases. I did --for La Nelson. And so he came over, remaining for dinner and on until 2:30. I having succeeded in getting in a shave and a change of costume before Mrs. Eakin and son, Paul, arrived.

I sent her on up the road to Beaufort to have a go at the family tree with Beth while Paul and I got busy taking what was calculated at about 100 pictures for slides. It went smoothly enough but it was so hot that I was all a-drip every few minutes, requiring a change from crumpled into starchier cos since I was scheduled to appear in some of the compositions.

After we had done the big house and struck several pictures inside and outside Yucca, involving much pushing and hauling around of furniture, and consequent change of costume, it was discovered that something along the way had happened to some of the films. This required that we start all over again, re-arranging the furniture and had been returned to accustomed places, changing costumes again and again and when we were finished, I was what might in all truth be described as a ten down piece.



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Just as we had finished the last picture we were going to take, Mrs. Eakin appeared. As might have been expected in anything involving la Beaufort, Beth explained that while she hoped Heritage would "do" the Prudhomme family tree Heritage would have to come to Beaufort to copy it as she would not let the thing go beyond the shelter of the Beaufort roof. In other words, so far as Mrs. Eakin was concerned, her entire trip was a complete waste of time and energy.

It was Mr. Eakin's birthday and there was a picnic planned by friends somewhere in Avoyelles Parish for the evening and so, after reviving them momentarily with a coke, I sent them on their way and climbed into some more dry clothes just as the supper bell was ringing.

It was during supper today's downpour started and so I got soaked again as between the big house and Yucca.

I was very interested to learn from James that he is working on a plan to have the Jallen book privately printed in Shreveport. It is extraordinary how many times possible publishers have at the last minute turned down this manuscript. Ketchum is a briskly commercial house in Natchez and although James had contacted them by letter, --registered let they didn't even respond although they have the facilities for doing this book about a Natchez historical point that seems to entrance everyone when they hear it. I think the primary interest James has in getting it into print is to establish a copyright for he feels as do I have felt ever since I first did the column years ago in a column that it is ideal vehicle for a movie, theatre and opera and now that more and more things in print and on the screen are concentrating on the slave angle, the time for the Jallen thing could not be better than right now.

I wished he had discussed the title and some of the material to be used in the volume with others, especially with me since I have given much time over the years advantageous points about the presentation of the work. But just so long as the story gets into print and is copy-righted, that is the main thing and now it appears that will be accomplished.

I took up the matter of la Nelson with him, wrote a letter of introduction to her for him to enclose in a letter to her about his paintings with a view to having a Los Angeles exhibition under the Kristin aegis and shall be holding the thought that may bear fruit to the advantage of both Nelson and Register and so the day breezes along the the rains continue

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Sunday, July 21st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Occasional gleams of sunshine but mostly clouds busy sp down rain with the thermometer sliding from 76 to 100 and the humidity matching the temperature.

As you may have already noticed, the first blossom of the butterfly has made its bow. In making my calculations as to the time of its arrival, I obviously failed to take into account the two heavy showers hurring things along. It is always in sunshine that I think of the blessed event taking place but this year it was different for it was in the midst of a shower at 3:10 this afternoon that this first one unfolded its loveliness. After contemplating its beauty through the curtain of rain cascading from the eaves along the front gallery, I turned back into the house and knocked off a column out of sheer joy but when I began writing, I realized I had probably already said about there is to be said on the subject in previous articles but I didn't mind repeating myself although I did have in mind that possibly at some distant age, somebody may want use in succession more than one column on the same subject and since today's effort was prosaic enough, perhaps it will fit together with "Sweet Snow" of last year although, naturally, I have forgotten what I jotted down at that time. And if it turns out that today's effort didn't amount to much, it can easily enough be skipped and nothing lost.

On Saturday morning I was surprised to see Lloyd Wenk had driven down from Shreveport before daylight. He brought me three more volumes having to do with Mormonism. said his mother had called him to say she wished he would bring home a lot of vegetables when he returned at noon. There were baskets of tomatoes, peppers, okra and what not in ample abundance for both his mother and for him and he appeared satisfied with the haul and I was grateful that he could turn them over to her instead of the necessity for her to come down for them.



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In spite of the inc. mency of the weather, there were plenty of people passing this way both yesterday and today. This afternoon, for instance, there was a 'phone call from across the fence, asking if I could give a little tour in spite of the drizzle. I could. Two of Miss Cam's nieces from the New Roads area had dropped in unannounced across the way, bringing a third lady with them. The elder Garret girl, Frances, is very nice but her sister, Naomi, --the gal what married millionaire Wurtelle or however that name is spelled constituted the members of the family present. This was the first time I had ever met Naomi and I was startled to see how in every respect she is a smitten image of her cousin, Camie, of Shreveport. She wanted family heirlooms on the strength that she and the Henrys had a common grandmother, Miss Leudivine, although what few things there are here that had belong to Miss Leudivine and were given to Cammie Garret Henry, her daughter at the time of Miss Leudivine's final illness. What's more she wanted the white linen tablecloth of Miss Cam's which bear the autographs of various people present at different times, each autograph embroidered in different colors showing which signatures were made at a particular date. All of these signatures were made years after Miss Leudivine's death and Miss Cam gave the cloth to J. H. years before her death. What claim the Garrets might dream of having on such an item, I cannot imagine. Needless to say, I was quite enchanted when Naomi and her party took off for Mansfield where they planned to spend the night with friends.

I found myself quite unprepared just after dinner this noon when J. H. had retired and Celeste and I were having our demi-tasse when out of a clear sky she said she had shortly before dinner she had received a call from some member of the Hysterical Ladies, asking for a Yes or No answer about Melrose being on the Pilgrimage this October. She said that of course we had to go along with the Pilgrim. I, personally feel the general situation provides a good reason for skipping participation this year but, of course, she would know more, but that than I. And so things turn and a happy first butterfly lily to little Miss Lee....

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Monday, July 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

The extraordinarily rainy weather continues, --another inch and a half having fallen again this afternoon. Our total for thus far this year stands at 56 inches. Cotton planters say the prospect for a crop are mighty poor. At least one planter of vegetables observes that the prospect in that tiny segment are definitely not too rosey, --at least not from here on out for the balance of the season.

The other day when sending along the list of color slides that have been produced to go along with the disc, I was thinking that a hundred such slides would bulk mightily. On giving the matter second thought, however, it occurs to me that if they are packaged after the manner of the ones originally put out by Heritage, the package containing them would not be inordinately large after all, if, say, ten slides were set forth in a strip containing ten. Be that as it may, I thought it would be nice for little Miss Lee to have a set if, as now assumed, they are of manageable size. I have accordingly ordered a set to be sent to me, passing along particulars to the aforesaid little Miss Lee. In case they prove to be too cumbersome as a package, I shall simply store them away in the armoire against such time in the future as they might be more easily provided with a pigeon-hole. I mention this matter simply to let it be known that, after further particulars have come to hand and sent along, the product itself will be readily to hand in case a place is found for them either at present or at some later time.

I called the Hatchitoches telephone business office to see what might be cooking in regard to the reading machine. Madam Broussard who has handled the matter during the past month was on 'phone business in Winfield. Somebody else volunteered to lend a hand and promised to call me back as soon as contact could be established with Alexandria office. The hour was about 9 a.m. and, having heard nothing by 4:30, I called the local office and surprise was expressed by the town office that I had not



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received a call directly from Alexandria, the latter place having  
promised to call me before noon. The local office professed amazement  
that so much time had elapsed since the machine had been picked up for  
repair. I professed nothing but an inclination to write  
Library of Congress that some better system for repairs had better  
be instituted Tomorrow I shall harass the local office again.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned tonight. She reported being tired of packing  
in anticipation for the Florida move on August 10th. She reported  
having already been assigned her Leesburg 'phone number, --  
787 - 5460 which is obviously an easy number to remember  
since it remained in my mind even though I cannot imagine ever having  
any occasion to make use of it. She reported having entertained some  
people yesterday and that Hampton Carver dropped in rather late.  
He is very enthusiastic about his law course at L. S. U. and reports  
making satisfactory progress. His mama reports he stands at the  
head of his present class. Naturally the Carvers ought to be  
pleased to the preening stage all around. Until  
after writing the phrase, it never occurred to me how it would  
look or sound but, having jotted it down, I tell myself I must  
toss it into a column one of these days, "pleased to the point  
of preening" or some such, don't you think so.

On the 10 o'clock news tonight, the Alexandria Weather  
Bureau stated that the humidity was 100 percent. That I  
can readily believe. What I have difficulty in taking for  
granted, however, is the difficulty everybody has in dis-enga-  
ging the flaps from the envelopes. Fortunately I have run across  
two or three envelopes for use in tonight's mail  
and I am promised at the store that a new shipment of standard  
ones will be forthcoming on the morrow from somewhere and I'm  
holding the thought they may not have already sealed themselves  
before they arrive. In trying to get one of the present  
stock items unglued to use it for a wrapper in sending along  
this week's Hatchitoches, I could only laugh at  
the difficulties encountered as may be readily seen when that  
effort reaches your true hand.

It was interesting to hear the State of Virginia or some  
hotel or other near Lexington and Natural Bridge, pro-  
claiming their fine "moderate" priced accommodations for tourists over  
WFL, New Orleans tonight. It seems a little late for seasonal ad-  
vertising of this sort and especially from that distance I'm wondering  
if Louisiana does likewise in Virginia and my guess is that  
she probably does not.

And now to the icebox for a crisp salad and some  
Tenderleaf tea awaiting my attention.....

15618

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Tuesday, July 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

The weather remains odd. The temperature range  
was unusually narrow, about 10 degrees instead of 20  
or 30, the low being about 75, the high  
about 85, but the rains remained true  
to this summer's pattern, --two inches again today  
and only a snatch of sunshine just before the close of day.

The surprise and delight of the day was the arrival  
of the beautifully colored Robert Kennedy issue  
of Life, together with clippings inserted among  
the pages which I haven't read as yet. It has been  
so inspirational, just turning through the pages so  
magnificently printed and I am impatient for to-  
morrow's dawn and, hopefully, a clear light so I may  
enjoy them all over again.

I know not why, but I was curious to learn the date  
of cancellation of this package, so neatly rolled up in the  
dark blue paper, the whole thing having traveled perfectly and  
yet there was the impulse to learn if possible when it was pos-  
sible to get any package, especially printed material, seems to get  
but scant attention by the person cancelling same but  
this mark was as clear as a bell, --A July 8th.  
Thinking the secretary wasn't exactly expert in deciphering  
cancellations, I took the wrapping to the Post Office later  
in the day and the clerk read it as did the secretary, July  
8th. Had it read July 18th, the time for its arrival would  
have been about right and perhaps the machine that  
stamped it had not been properly set but if it did indeed  
go into the post on the 8th and required two weeks to  
get here it does seem a little long-ish en route. I mention  
this merely because it either shows that a cancellation date  
could be wrong or traveling time could be beyond  
the expected but, naturally, the important thing is  
that it really did come through to delight my day.

The merchant-planter mentioned he was going to Baton Rouge  
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on the morrow and would be happy if he could make the General equally so, were some Ghana vegetables could be rounded up for the latter. With half of the vegetable garden under water from today's deluge, piled on to that of the downpours of previous days, it will take a dab of fancy footwork to pluck fruit from the plants and not get one's self drowned in the process or the plants themselves eased out of the slippery mud in which their roots are still standing. But there will be some edible things to hand by take-off time and I shall also shed along a disc as a gesture for while the General might appreciate the thought, it is doubtful if anybody in his menage will have the slightest interest in what is implicit in the recording.

There was a 'phone call from some gentleman, --the name sounded like Kennedy, from the Alexandria 'phone company this afternoon. He said he had met me here on some occasion, that the matter of the reading machine had been called to his attention and that he would try to bring it up himself toward the end of the week. I hope it is "toward the end" and not the weekend. There was some rigamarole about the machine in question having only two speeds and that the reason for the delay in returning it was due to the fact an effort was being made to incorporate a third speed along with the other two. Since all the talking books I have ever had are either 33 and a third r.p.m. or 16 and two thirds, I can't imagine why an effort should be made to inject another. It seems to me that in commercial records at one time some years back, there was a 45 r.p.m. disc on the market but, so far as I know, that has been more or less discarded and, in any event, that revolutions per minute.

Three times while writing the above paragraph the 'phone rang, cutting off each time as I picked up the receiver. Then it rang the fourth time. It was James. He said Kay 'phoned Carrie on Saturday night about 9. She was slow about answering, explaining she had not turned on the light and had started across the room, bumping into something and falling down. Next day she went to a Saline doctor who sent her to the hospital in Shreveport with one broken rib and one broken kneecap.

Perhaps I had better put a carbon in my letter to Blythe since misery is said to love company. Both girls will have plenty of "shop talk" when next they establish contact.....

15620

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Wednesday, July 24th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Marvelous to relate, although it remains humid and hot, we have had only a half an inch of rain today.

But there was a bundle of sunbeams in today's envelope from Lyme under date of the 22nd.

I rejoice with you over the transfer to 108. What a happy feeling it is to know that one is so comfortably installed and all the surroundings are so suggestive of pleasantness. It does seem odd, even as other have remarked about quite different localities, that sometimes a comparatively short distance in actual mileage takes longer to carry through than treks to distant point was effected by the jet. May all the days stretching into the future for the patient be pleasantly dappled with sunshine.

And how nice to hear from auntie and to know that everything treveled through to the intended destination. It was so kind of little Miss Lee to give me all the particulars covering the matter.

And, like little Miss Lee, so was Lestan wondering recently about the matter of the slides and if the whole set had to be purchased or if they might be secured individually. But as indicated by a recent letter, this really doesn't matter now since Lestan has already ordered a set to be sent him so that if the bulk isn't too great, it may be passed along to little Miss Lee when she has had an opportunity to decide if she wants it in its entirety, after receiving an account of its size. Lestan, in the mean time, has written Heritage requesting information on this point and I should imagine information might be forthcoming within a few days.

I was so surprised last night when in the midst of the column the news came through from James about C. Briarwood Dorman's accident that I don't remember if I mentioned that Natalie had called earlier in the evening to check on the column. I try not to change any more than is absolutely imperative although as may readily be imagined, there are usually lots of things I would change around, were it not for imposing extra work on the person checking. After all, I suppose few people, sitting down to a machine blindfolded and knock



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off a column, would not find plenty of things that might be altered advantageously when once the blindfold was removed and one had an opportunity to glance through it for the correction of errors, some of which may well have been made consciously in the writing but which, under the circumstances, could not be changed well in the midst of the doings. And then, too, there are inevitable errors, as was the case in last night's reading, when speaking of the date the butterfly lilies first bloomed last year and I had struck the digits 3 and 1 when intending to write the numerals 1 and 3, an insignificant matter at best and yet, had it gone uncorrected, would have made no sense when further along I remarked that this year the flowering was a week and a day behind last year's.

We touched momentarily on matters concerning the Saxon biography. Both she and her secretary had combed the index covering Colliers and could find no reference to Hugh Saxon, Lyle's father, who had written an article along lines appearing in a series of articles by other men, all of whom were unacquainted with their famous sons. My guess was that Collier's was the magazine and that it had appeared sometime during the decade of the 1930's. I remember Miss Cam having spoken of it more than once early in the 1940's. Perhaps it was in some other magazine such as Liberty, but I think it was Colliers. It is possible in whatever publication it did appear, that the authorship was attributed to someone else in the index, one of those things, the actual writing being done by another, "as told by Hugh Saxon". But it is fun trying to track down such items and I have no doubt we shall eventually stumble over it.

I am making the suggestion that in collecting material, we keep in mind that often and especially since his death, Lyle has been often mentioned as "Louisiana's most beloved writer", and possibly some continuity made be added to the biography if such a concept is constantly kept in mind as a thread or motif running throughout.

Mrs. Chopin called last night. I hadn't heard from her in some time and was glad to learn she had been in New Orleans to get her daughter to giving or give her a fitting for some clothes she is going to take with her in a week or two when she journeys up to Ohio to attend her son's wedding, he having divorced his first wife during the past year or the first wife having divorced him or how ever it was. While in the Crescent City there was a family reunion held in Audubon Park and a member of the Ark Commission is a member of the family, there were lots of free rides for the children and every convenience for the grownups.

This morning the merchant-planter headed out for Baton Rouge with the vegetables. It will be interesting to learn what was cooked up down there.....

15622

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Thursday, July 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Heat and humidity in the 90's but lots of sunshine and only 15 minutes of rain along a bout mid afternoon.

The best part of the day came in the morning when I made the most of the opportunity to run through several items for the second time including the Lyme letter of Monday, finding a laugh all over again when encountering the "biday". And speaking of that listing in which that Americanize rendition appears reminds me that in response to my order for a complete set of the slides, as mentioned yesterday, together with various other inquiries about retail and wholesale prices on the complete set and about the possibility of securing individual ones or strips of several together, and in response came a letter which I shall enclose herewith if I can my hand on it. Whether I do find it or not, however, doesn't matter since I got no satisfactory response and not even a reference to the order which I had placed I shall knock another note regarding the outright order and report further to little Miss Lee --if and when some kind of an answer to Heritage is forthcoming.

There was also a letter from Sarah Irwin Jones in today post which I shall enclose. I think it cleverly composed in covering the subject touched upon. I shall try to get a letter off to her tonight, too, but in typical S. I. J. fashion, say-rah omitted to jot down her street number, --I'm sure it is North Street, Baton Rouge, but I shall not be able to make out the envelope until I can contact the Library in town to find out the street number.

Along about 3 o'clock this afternoon, the Randy Jacks appeared at my door and I was slap happy to see them. I had not seen them since their March nuptial and found possessed as usual with that rare combina-



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of delightful humor and fascinating intellect. I guess Randy took his final exams at Yale Law School along in June, after which they drove to Seattle, probably to find a home for settling down there within a few months. They also acquired somewhere along the way a kind of car that looked a little bigger than a station wagon in which they can sleep while on tour. They had stopped at Shreveport and after pausing here going on to Alexandria to see Blythe and thence back to Shreveport tonight and on to Houston to see her mother and then head South for Mexico and thence to Guatemala, Honduras and so on down to Panama and then turn back to Seattle. It sounds like quite a project and they were just loving it. They are both rather short and rather thin and somehow give the impression of being just out of Babes in Toyland.

On the plantation, this and that person remarked about folding up their beards early tonight because most of them got up between 3 and 4 o'clock this morning, attracted by the blaze that destroyed the honkey-tonk at the west end of the Melrose bridge, a little big south and on the opposite bank of the river from the Rand Camp. There wasn't much insurance on the place which belonged to Sonny Jones, nephew of the late Bill Jones. There was no insurance on the contents of the building, the honkey-tonk being operated by "Bookie" Morin, quasi senile of the late Fugate. The absence from the landscape of that honkey-tonk will throw much of the trade into the laps of the Metayers operating the other honkey-tonk just up the road apiece above the artist's atelier, leading one to assume this weekend should be a busy one in the immediate neighborhood.

The watermelon is in full swing at present and these grown in the Briarwood area are greatly preferred to all others. The merchant-planter sent me a very nice specimen tonight and before getting down to the mail, I think I shall take it from the icebox and carve myself a big slab by way of bacing myself against a few things that I want to get taken care of before the morrow.....

15624

Friday, July 26th, 1968.

# Memorandum:

Fair, with the heat up and the humidity down and, although it seems difficult to believe, not a drop of rain.

I started off the day both wrong and right with an over-all dash of good luck. Instead of wearing boots when going to the Chana garden at dawning, I wore shoes. On my return, I stopped at the boot scraper along the front gallery to remove whatever trash I had picked up by way of mud and new mown hay. There is a double scroll of ironwork rising above holding in place the scraper itself. Perhaps because the cuff trousers was damp, something new happened. I didn't notice it until a slip second too late. The cuff of the trousers slipped over the iron scroll upright and as I drew back my foot cuff caught me or the scroll and somehow contrived to throw me on to the brick pavement. As I crashed I was saying to myself:

"Oh, Lord, I hope Blythe, Carrie and Say-rah don't want company too much".

By good luck, I discovered I could pick myself up--all in one piece and although my right hip and right arm are a little black and blue, the bone structure is obviously all intact and I tell myself I shall be more particular the next time I use the scraper when wearing long pants.

I am happy to report that about 9 o'clock a gentleman out Alexandria appeared bearing the reading machine. I am certainly glad to have it back and seemingly it functions perfectly although I haven't had an opportunity to try it out for more than a sampling while the man was here for I discovered long ago in the case of both typewriters and reading machines, it is well for me to try them out before the person in charge departs, since, as on occasions in the past, it has turned out that although something simple as pie is holding up the works, I would do better to prove to myself I can operate the contraptions before people versed in the operation disappear over the horizon before I set my hand to put the machines in motion.



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I am attaching a carbon copy of a memo I am sending to Natalie to go with the data being gathered together on the Saxon matter. One of the children mentioned in the memo, Carmen's niece, passed this way two or three weeks ago. Her present age is about 40. Assuming she was about 10 at the time she was in the movies, the date of that discovery of Hugh Saxon can be established approximately easily enough. Another child, Kic Winslow, was also doing child parts in the movies at that time, --sort of the era of Jackie Coogan and Mickey Rooney.

I am also enclosing a letter in today's post from the New Orleans architect, Ray, who is a man of some sensitivity. It is impossible under present circumstances to entertain the Messenias for several days in a row and I shall advise him accordingly but shall welcome them for a little tour without camp. It occurs to me now and I shall touch upon the matter in my letter to Mr. Ray that the photographing of any gardens and particularly plantation gardens, there is a time element which is imperative if one hopes to capture the soul of the subject. Pictures of gardens worth preserving are dependent on the conditions obtaining at various seasons throughout the twelfth month and no matter how diligent the photographer might be in any concentrated 3 or 4 day period, day after day, the desired impression could not be obtained with the films obtained in such a 3 or 4 day period. The condition of the foliage, the stage of the flowers, the presence or absence of leaves at a given date, sometimes screening undesirable segments, sometimes removing curtains cutting off views, all combine along with the stage and varying stages of flowering things, to make a photographic presentation of any garden a series of pictures at different months of the year to produce the maximum effect of beauty in all its many aspects. --Chinese magnolias in March, crepe myrtles in July, butterfly lilies in August, Guernsey lilies in September, gourds in October, mandarin in December and so on so forth.

I should be hard put to decide, if given a choice of season or what month I would select to capture the maximum effect of such a garden as Versailles, May when the tender leaves are just unfolding, October when the leaves are falling, July when the fountains are going or when. Surely it is a collection of these time elements that produce the greatest joy and more perfect concept on film as to what Mother Nature has arranged for the entire year.

Some home made blueberry muffins and a tall glass of milk await me. I trust the Lyme larder is ample for snacks this night, too.

15626

Sunday, July 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Two or perhaps three days without a drop of rain and it's all so unusual. The sunshine is dazzling and the temperature high but the humidity not so bad.

Mildred McCoy 'phoned me this morning. I can't remember when I last heard from her. She said she is taking off this week for Alaska on one of those tour things comprised of a dozen ladies. I believe it is under the same auspices as arranged her trip to Hawaii last year or when ever. She drives from here to Shreveport, takes a plane to Dallas and changes to another that put her down in Seattle. From there they fly up the coast to Juneau and continue on to Anchorage and thence by train, I thought she said, to Fairbanks and then back to the coast and take a steamer down the inside passage back to Seattle and thence home. I forgot to ask her how long a trip it will be. I suppose the boat trip will be about a week so I imagine a month ought to do it easily enough. I think Mildred is smart to enjoy herself thus, what with ample funds, Lucille Conahan and helpers to look after Bayou Folk Museum and nobody at home to require her attention.

She had a couple of things to relate that she thought I might have seen in the paper. One was about a girl in Japan who is currently all the rage in that country in the entertainment field, perhaps TV or some such. The girl had never seen her father who was an American soldier who had be-gotten her, unwedded, by a Japanese girl. After considerable investigating it turned out that the American father was from somewhere around Cloutierville from quite a no-account family and following his return from the Far East, had married somebody in Louisiana and now has a family of several children and the American wife.

And then there was something about having to dispose of her dog, -- a German police dog, I believe. -- Be that as it may, the dog took to disliking people, including Mildred servants and ended up by chewing up the arm of one of her little hostesses at the Museum.

And then she slightly touched on her son withdrawing from Cousin Arthur's club but I had heard that from another quarter and that was that. She threatened to send me a card from



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I sent Natalie a column on Friday, thinking she might find it easier to run through with me over the weekend and accordingly I 'phoned her this afternoon, primarily to ask if she would like another by tomorrow's post since there was another ready, offering an opportunity to get a few disposed of in advance before she left for Chicago or where ever it is she is going, not to mention the wedding next week, --Saturday, perhaps, or some such time. She answered the 'phone but said "we", --meaning her spouse, I suppose, are in the midst of clearing or cleaning a room and she would call back and I said there was no rush and that would be fine. Perhaps she called while I was across the fence as between 6 and 8. Anyhow it is now 10:30 and it would appear I shall no hear from her before tomorrow's out-going mail and so I shall drop the extra column in the post regardless and perhaps we can do a couple of them instead of one when we get around to it.

And speaking of columns reminds me of the hilarious time I had last night trying to take dictation from the reading machine. I was stirring up something about "Cocktails and Feathers" sprinkling in large expanses of direct quotation from a book about birds. I thought I had waited until it was late enough so there would be no interruptions for it was the kind of material that is rather difficult for me to keep in mind as to where interruptions require me to drop the thing and go back and pick up if I can remember where leaving off. I got along alright for a few lines and the interruptions began, --telephone calls, night callers, appeals from scufflers in honkey-tonk brawls and so on. I cannot recall a night of so many ~~xxx~~ break-ins and what sense, if any, the resulting manuscript made, I shall be curious -- and shame-faced -- to learn.

There are two or three enclosures, none of which are of any particular interest but I am enclosing them regardless to keep one's breast warm. There are a few letters to be written tonight, a little matter inviting my attention in the city and hence to my downy pillow to see what's cooking on the radio.....

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Monday, July 29th, 1968.

Memorandum: Fair and hot this morning. About 19:30 the sound of thunderbolts crashing in the Bermuda area where a young flood ensued, the water going over the highways. Down this way we received only about a quarter of an inch of moisture in spite of the vast racket. It cleared off by noon and tonight the skies are cloudless.

It was so nice finding Friday's letter from Lyme in today's post. It was so thoughtful of little Miss Lee to touch on various points in the local press and no one had mentioned to Lest, then news items that were mentioned.

I am so glad the matter of the slides was mentioned and I am glad to learn that 100 should not be too bulky to manage at Lyme. It seems odd the lists should have been sent out before the slides were available. I think I mentioned having ordered a set for little Miss Lee but nothing has come to hand as yet and no reference to the order in the recent letter from Heritage. I must put a flea in the Heritage ear.

This morning while the thunder was rolling mightily I received a 'phone call from I. S. Willard. She had received a cable from her son, announcing that he and his wife had just become the proud parents of a daughter, weight 8 pounds and named Katherine "with a K". He stork dropped the blessed bundle slap on London town. Smart m always minding other people's business, remarked to I. S. W. that now was her golden opportunity to start a diary for her new grandchild, starting it with the first entry on the day she was born and giving full particulars. Follow that event by day to day entries, recalling how, when and where Katherine's papa had first seen the light of day and continuing the entries, day after day, each one covering so event or personality that in future years, the little new comer, then grown tall, would cherish as particulars passed along to her b her American grandmother. I. S. W. thought the idea just inspirational and, of course, will never get around to make the initial entry, I am quite sure but she enjoys contemplating it



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This afternoon about 2, three ladies having something to do with "The Slave" appeared on the Yucca gallery. They said they thought somebody had made arrangements with me to see them. I believe one of them is having something to do with the movie script and I don't know what the others are up to. In any event, I enjoyed chatting with them and showing them a few things. They were going on from here to Beaufort where a couple of scenes in the picture will be incorporated as the work progresses.

Natalie just called to run through a column, --

"Big Wigs and Little Britches". She seemed to be feeling fine and said she is having her final conference with Mrs. Walker on the morrow concerning handling various aspects of the manuscripts. At the same time she suggested we get busy selecting some suitable columns for submission to a publisher, -- something that should have been done long ago, of course, but impossible under existing circumstances. She also touched on one or two points about gathering Saxon material and I mentioned a couple of passes I am making in that general direction. Toward the end of the conversation I could sense that her time was being impinged upon and so I did not inquire about her immediate plans but, if memory serves, her son's wedding comes off shortly, -- perhaps the first week in August, and after that the jaunt to Illinois or Wisconsin or where ever.

Just after Natalie departed from the wire, Mrs. Walker called. She said that as yet she had been unsuccessful in locating a TV set without pictures, something which I certainly don't want since I don't even have time to catch up with the radio programs I should like to hear. She mentioned that she has advised the hospital she is withdrawing her offer to place a fountain of some sort somewhere on the grounds of that institution in memory of her husband. I believe this must be the one she ordered from the sculptor whose name I forgot, until recently, -- June, perhaps, has been at the college, -- the same man who did some things for Hodges Gardens. She says she has waited long enough for the hospital to make up its mind about accepting it and will haul it off to Florida when she leaves for there 10 days or so hence.

So turneth the world and so must I turn to some ice cream and a slab of cake.....

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Tuesday, July 30th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 90's and no rain and tonight the waxing moon is so lovely, I think the boys and I will meander over to the Ghana garden a little later to contemplate the stars and inhale the pleasant aroma prevailing there, -- sweet basil, mint honeysuckle and whatever else for beauty chances to blending into the gently moving air.

I should have accomplished more during the morning had there not been interruptions. About 8 o'clock, Doreatha sought me out in the iris garden to say there were two ladies to see me. Although pleasantly adrip with dew, I received them, a pleasant lady perhaps in her mid 60's, accompanied by a teen age girl. The elder of the two explained she was a social worker out of Philadelphia but possibly located in Louisiana and she went on to confide to me that she was somehow related to Bishop Greco of Alexandria. I served that aside from the surprise of seeing pilgrims so early in the morning, I was disappointed about my appearance. She responded casually that she never minded being early. I smiled instead of saying that I didn't mind being early either just so long as other people didn't demonstrate their feelings on me.

I guess she didn't know this area too well in spite of her claim to relationship to the Bishop since she asked me from whence came a priest to hold services at the Ile Brevelle Church. I said the Church had a couple of resident priests which seemed to be quite beyond her ability to believe.

In pointing out the portrait of Grandpa and the little church in the background, I remarked that Lyle Saxon had had something to say about the locality in his "Children of Strangers". She had never heard of either the author or the book. She said she would like to read the novel and asked if I had a copy. I said I did. She said she would be glad to take it along with her and bring it back eventually. I lied and said my copy was not readily to hand as someone before her had asked to borrow it.

So much for the visitors at that hour. About 11:30 the clerk phoned me from the store to say "those people are here". I told him I wasn't expecting anybody. He said they had



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made an appointment through somebody. I knew nothing about it but said I would give them a quick tour if they would meet me immediately at the frontgate. The party turned out to be 4 or 5 forwn ups and or 15 children, all negroes. One of the gentlemen said he was from St. Paul "way up North" and one of the ladies said she lived here on the river. In response to my inquiry as to the approximate location, she said she lived at CaneRiver Village. I never heard of the place and nobody else of whom I inquired subsequently. It seems the appointment was made through Doreatha but the cook had forgotten to tell me and had had to go to town this morning but we had a tour anyway and everybody had a nice time.

Two other news items have to do with relatives, one of Clementine Hunter, the other of a nephew of Fugabou. By the way, the group mentioned just above turned out to be some kin of Fugabou's.

As for the step grandson of Clementine, --the son of the lady whom King Hunter married a while back, that boy invested in a new car the other day, headed out down the road between Cloutierville and Monette's Ferry at 100 miles an hour, went through the windshield and the car burned up but the boy was thrown clear of the wreck and, according to Doreatha who has seen him, had to have 72 stitches just in his face alone. I shudder to think what will happen if the boy feels an impulse to smile or frown.

The other episode concerns Fugabou's nephew who lives up Bermuda way. As Doreatha explains, "he's a pretty old little old boy but jus' now he done got around to take religion". Anyway, he attended a revival at St. Mathew's last night but the magical spell didn't strike him until about 10 o'clock this morning when he was walkin' in the big road when he suddenly "done got the jerks". Some poor white trash who didn't unders tand such things thou he was drunk and 'phoned for the Law and the Law came and put handcuffs on him but when the boy's mama explained what it was all about, the Law took off the handcuffs and told the boy to go on home with his mama and take plenty of asperin and that would cure the jerks and the religion all at the same time which is the most extravagant claim for the power of asperin I have ever heard.

And now for a turn with the boys at Ghana, after which they will have theirsaucer of milk and I shall try a bowl of ice cream.....

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Wednesday, July 31st, 1968.

Memorandum.

Fair in the mid 90's and still in the 80's beneath the moon. I hold the thought that the saucer of milk for the boys and the bowl of ice cream for Lestan will prove as entrancing tonight as last night after our stroll in the Garden.

My day from beginning to end was clutter up with people, all pleasant enough but allowing no opportunity for getting any work done.

Juanita B. called this morning if she might bring, as she asked, some nice people from the college, here from Florida who yearning to see this bend of the river. I was glad she called for it gave me an opportunity to fix up a nice basket of vegetables just plucked in the morning dew which I thought she and her family might enjoy.

She seemed to be just fine and said there was much going on at her house, what with a swimming pool being built between the house and CaneRiver. "Water, water everywhere and not a drop to swim in."

Just as I hastened back to Yuoca to tear off my sweating shirt, Thelma Kyser 'phoned. She wanted to do a lot of talking and ask me how I had fared with "The Slave" people earlier in the week. She said that as soon as John had seen the script, he had tossed it back to the movie people saying he would have nothing to do with it. According to Thelma, the script calls for a big jealousy number, a white gentleman and a mistress of color, no end of cruelty and so on. According to Thelma, the movie people wanted to rent the Madame Aubin House for a couple of scenes and a corner on Front Street in Hatchitoches for which they would install a block for the selling of slaves for scenes in the picture. The offer was thirty thousand dollars but the City Fathers turned it down on the theory the film would be merely sensational at just the time when there was enough sensationalism going on race wise.

While Thelma was going a mile a minute on this subject and



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James appeared and remained for noon dinner. The Hatches Prince I come out in October according to the Shreveport printer. We went into some detail about reviews for the book and various places where it, the book, can be put on the market. At the moment he seems to think that enough ought to sell in Natchez by the two Pilgrimage Clubs to dispose of the first edition. He doesn't seem anxious to get it in other cities. I see little point in arranging elaborate reviews in out of town papers if the book is not to be put in the bookstores of the several cities where it is reviewed. He is to hold the copyright and I believe he hopes that eventual movie rights will bring in the money.

James reports that Carrie is in Shumpert hospital although there is nothing to indicate where she is on the enclosed card which came from her today. Mrs. E. C. Mc Clanahan, whom she mentions is her niece, Caroline Dromon Mc Clanahan and I suppose she takes Carrie her mail. James reported Kay and Mrs. Crabtree went to call on Carrie a few days ago. She shared a hospital room with another lady and Carrie was complaining she can never be alone, always so many visitors calling on her room mate, patient and guests being present while Carrie was shouting out the complaints to her two guests.

Some of my former neighbors, the Phil Johnson, now living in Shreveport, appeared unannounced today. Some of them still live in Shreveport, others have gone west as far as Las Vegas while Alton, the boy who won all the General Motor award is said to be doing handsomely in Los Angeles.

And then there were people from Lake Charles and how they got inside the front gate, I don't know. And then there were people from Dallas and more people from Oregon, not to mention a couple different calls by plantation people in search of advice on some of their problems and secretaries never got around to see me until 8:30 which is a poor time to do mail after too long at expending energies on pilgrims.

You will find the enclosed letter from La Nelson interesting. I am amused at the way she sends a hundred dollars against future purchases. She apparently thought the two cook books and the Picayune article which James sent to her, were sent at my direction which they but definitely are not. And so things turn and so much the boys and I at hand.....

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Thursday, August 1st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with a blazing sun by day and a beaming moon by night, temperatures sliding from the 80's to the 100's and back again.

It was so nice to find such a lovely letter from Lyme in today's post. It is so good to have so many pieces of news, no the least of which is the fact that an outing is being planned just ahead. I shall be holding the thought that the weather may be cooperating in every respect.

I was pleased to learn the Saxon material proved of interest. In regard to searching for the article in Collier's, I pray you to try to persuade little Miss Lee not to expend too much energy in her search for the Hugh Saxon article. I find myself wondering at the mention of the name if it could be one of those article, even as some book list the author, as being under some such by-line as "By Hugh Saxon as told to Somebody" or, to make it more confusing: "By Somebody as related by Hugh Saxon". Since the real name of "Mr. Somebody is unknown to us, it is very difficult if Mr. Somebody's name should appear first instead of that of Hugh Saxon.

It goes without saying I am delighted to have news regarding auntie, the aspects of travel in an eastwardly direction requiring passports and so on, and the account of the family honoring her on her natal day. I especially rejoice that her son's mother-in-law is still with her for it does seem to me that the two ladies, both equally concerned with the happiness of their offspring, should be of the greatest benefit to each other.

Pilgrims made a shambles of my day in that I got a chance to do nothing, not even catch my breath although the people coming and going were, for the most part, pleasant enough.

Yesterday, Miss Kate Perkin's nephew, Jimmie, just back from Hawaii, called from town ask if he might bring down his daughter, his wife and her sister. I suggested today at



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1:30. My morning had been exceptionally busy and I was glad the Perkins contingent were right on the dot. We got started on a tour and when ret from Ghana, five figures appeared, seeming to be four gentlemen and one lady. I waved them in the direction of the Ghana garden and continued toward the African House with the Perkinses. As we were leaving the African House, heading for Yucca, the five invaders appeared and waited them upstairs in the African House, thinking I was rid of them and wondering how they had got in as I had put out the word at the store that I had guests. Entering Yucca from the white garden side, we were all quite taken aback when the five people we had encountered before started coming in the house from the other side. They didn't get far for I ushered out the first three, already in and on the front gallery explain I had guests by appointment only and that my guests, as they had observed were already with me. They said they were members of the company filming "The Slave". I asked them if they were intending to visit Beau Fort but they had never heard of it. On that note, I waved them in the general direction of the big sugar pot and the path leading toward the front garden and I returned to the Perkinses. Later I learned from August that there was only one man in the party, the other four being ladies, one wearing a dress, the other pants. I asked it clerk about their presence here and he said they had come into the store stated that they had an appointment with me and so he had let them come.

There was quite a lot of mail today but I did not even attempt to wade through most of it. And speaking of mail, it seems odd to me that there hasn't been a letter from Robina lately. I should have supposed she would have known all about Miss Dormon's misadventure and written me about it at the time or sent along some word subsequently. Perhaps she thought I received the news from the Registers but even so, it seems odd she didn't send along a report regardless. I hold the thought that she hasn't fallen and banged a kneecap or some such.

Father Anthony got back from his vacation in Poland, arriving this morning. I bumped into him at the Post Office. He said things in Poland were much the same as a year or two ago when he was there. He said everybody spoke quite freely in spite of rather tight Communist controls. He found Paris, where he stopped on his way back, much as usual. I learned from him that Aurie girl, which I didn't sense before, is not far from Soeaur. And now I must get busy and do a job of mail and then take a turn by moonlight in the Ghana garden with the boys.....

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Friday, August 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and warm --75 -100.

I believe the old expression, "taking a shot in the dark" best explains the letter I dashed off, a carbon of which I attach. Several times James has said he thought Sidney Poitier is just the man to play the Prince. I am not telling James about this letter and as his name or the title of his book isn't mentioned, I shall have violated no confidences or revealed no secrets in sending it. If nothing comes of it, it never needs to be mentioned. As James has remarked on occasion, "If only we knew somebody, the actor himself, his agent or somebody in the organization for which Poitier makes films. It would be remarkable if one or the other of the Nelsons might be able to make some suggestion. In the meantime, the book is being copy-righted, the first thing any movie maker insists upon, and it seems to me I might just as well make this inquiry from the Nelsons while the mechanical part of the publication goes forward. It only occurred to me today that I must have written the story of the Prince in a column a number of years ago which, as I think back upon it, may have been the reason for the interest that moved James to undertake a longer version of it. What continues to puzzle me is the fact that it has somehow eluded movie-makers, playwrights and biographers all these years.

During mid afternoon when the thermometer was the highest, John Kyser 'phoned just as I was coming in for a swallow of "cooly" and I was glad of the opportunity to collapse on the wire for a little while. He had heard members of "The Slave" troupe had honored me a couple of times this week and he wanted to relate his experiences with the producers a month back. He said they had invited him to stay in the same caravansarie in Shreveport where they were residing, suggesting he



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remain as their guest from July 1st through September, I believe he said. He had brought the manuscript back to Patchitoches with him to go over carefully but hadn't gone far before he realized that he would have no part in the proceedings in as much as from the script, it was evident that the picture would excite more racial animosity than anything else and he wrote the producers a detailed account of his feelings. He promised to let me have a copy of his letter if I care to have it. I got him off on to politics and, as he is an extreme conservative, he is all in favor of Richard Nixon. Then we did quite a measured tour of ecumenic Europe and before I realized it, I was running low on "cooly".

I talked with Natalie last night. She had been to consult with Mrs. Wagner about the catalogue work she had done here and on Saxon data. She could remember having seen the Hugh Saxon article somewhere but couldn't recall the details but said she would think about it and it would probably come back. I was in hopes we might run through a column she had received in the mail for me on Monday but she said she hadn't had an opportunity to glance at it as yet. I like to check on the contents of a column as soon as possible after having written it since the sooner it is examined, the easier it is for me to remember when I had in mind to say in case there were words or phrases that had failed to come through clearly on the manuscript. She said everybody at her house including herself had a busy social schedule immediately before them, teas, dinners and what not in anticipation of the son's wedding on the 10th. It all sounded like a very busy August just ahead.

One night last week Mrs. Walker told me that she had made John and Thelma mad by having criticized a book unfavorably, -- one written by their friend, Dr. Yvonne Phillips. John said nothing about it today but Thelma had hinted at it the other day. It seems such a pity that almost the only remaining friends in town should have been alienated before the actual takeoff for Florida. I have never seen a clearer case of a person making an unpleasant climate and then complaining about the weather. I believe it is a week from tomorrow the Walkers take off to establish themselves in the Leesburg, Florida area.

And so begins the first weekend in August. I shall be holding the thought the little excursion out of town may turn out refreshing.....

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Sunday, August 4th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Except for an hour Saturday evening between 7 and 8, it has been fair and warm and humid all weekend. It got a little more humid on Saturday evening when an inch of rain suddenly descended in a streak running east to west a little less than a mile in width and that was it.

By sundown the moon was up and life could go on at the honkey-tonk as usual. But by Sunday's dawn, the plantation had as good as lost two of its field hands, -- Coke, father of 8, and McKinley, father of none who will probably be going to Angola again one of these days. It was McKinley, junior, who used to give me a hand in the garden and a fine worker he is, too.

McKinley, sometimes called Bud or Bub, is a nephew of Noonie Baptist Morris, the lady who married Jack Marcel Morris a few years ago and was frequently styled The Bride. Coke is a son-in-law of Murphy Brown who already has too many children grandchildren.

After a prolonged session at the honkey-tonk, Coke and his sister and Noonie and her nephew, McKinley, went to Noonie's cabin, the self same place where the artist lived below the spillway a dozen years ago. What happened next, I haven't learned as yet but about 3:15 A.M. Coke and McKinley got into some kind of a scuffle and, according to my informant, McKinley "cut Coke's right artery" and Coke bled to death within 10 minutes.

There will be a big funeral and the widow and children will receive \$150. per month from the Welfare Department which is more than they ever got from Coke, it is said.

The local radio carried the doings which seemed to be about the only thing outside Republican Convention news out of Miami Beach that the ether waves carried and I must say the home doings was far more exciting.

McKinley had dropped in to see me on Thursday. He was recalling the years he had spent in Angola after shooting Frog in the stomach with a shotgun. I recall so vividly what



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McKinley and observed when he came to see me immediately after having served his time in prison:

"You know, you really do meet some of the nicest people down there."

And now he is going to have an opportunity to meet them all again unless, as may well be the case, the whole matter is dismissed as a matter of self defense.

Natalie called me this morning while her household was still asleep, --perhaps 9 o'clock. She had a column to do and we did it. Her son, I know not which one, home last night in time for the party, which party, I know not, and a series of festivities are on the docket for the ensuing week. It seems to me the wedding of the one son comes off this coming Saturday. I believe college closed its summer course yesterday so I take it Natalie will catch a bit of a breather as between now and September 13th or whenever it is school re-opens.

Elder Myers, momentarily of Shreveport, called me from Alexandria early this afternoon, asking if he might bring three or four distinguished Mormons, slap out of Utah, this afternoon. He might. And fine ladies and gentlemen they were. One gentleman, Fairchilds, Fairbanks or some such, seems to be an especially big wheel among the Mormons and his personal it was as big as his reputation. The ladies just knew they would love the disc, about which Elder Myers had spoken and they simply couldn't get away without taking some with them. I never conducted such a speedy go-round and the brevity apparently suited everybody as it most certainly did me.

Saturday's mail was heavy and I haven't finished it as yet but hope to do so before the morrow.

I forgot to say the other evening that Natalie told me that when she dropped by the Walker-Gnung apartment on Thursday, I guess it was, to pick up some columns, Mrs. Gnung presented her with the photographic study of Lestan by Elmore Morgan, explaining that she had had hers at the time she had a house of her own and as her daughter had one and as they would soon be living in the same house in Florida, she thought Natalie might like hers and Natalie took it.....

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Monday, August 5th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, hot, humid and no rain.

It has been a long day and a busy one, what with pilgrims in the morning and afternoon and those Republican politicians at Miami Beach running too late into the night.

This morning an engineer out of Alexandria stopped at my door. He had been to Hatchitoches on business and had told himself that he would never be closer than now to the place about which he had read so much and accordingly he took a chance at catching sight of me and succeeded. He said I couldn't imagine with what satisfaction all during every week he looked forward to the arrival of Saturday when he knew he would be able to take up the Town Talk and commune for a little while with a view from the plantation country. I wasn't quite sure about commuting with a view but that was of no matter. August had brought him to my door and after he had introduced himself to me he turned and with a wave of his hand

"That is bound to be Goldie Hunter!" as he pointed to the yellow cat and the two black one stretched out on the cool brick

It was a great pleasure to stroll about with him and notice the of points he recognized from the initial acquaintance he had made with them in his reading.

--He said he is the proud father of five children and a wonderful wife but -- and here's the amazing part of it all, he never did ask if he might bring the family for a tour, a courtes. I certainly appreciated although if the wife is half as nice as the husband, it would certainly be a pleasure to see her.

At close of day I immediately fell to hammering away on this typewriter, intending to break off in time to pick up the



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broadcast from Miami Beach but somehow time and Mr. Eisenhower slipped by me before I realized how swiftly the hands of the clock were going I did hear Mr. Goldwater, however, and Mayor Lindsay and Governor Evans, the keynoter from the State of Washington. Goldwater always displays an excellent radio personality, but I liked the interview with the press immediately afterward wherein Mr. Goldwater remarked that neither the Republican Party nor he had changed one bit in the last four years. I found that, like so many Goldwater statements, to be on the deplorable side. After all, a political party that doesn't change one bit in four years isn't going to amount to much for very long, especially after the resounding defeat to which Goldwater led his party four years ago.

James called me at noon to say he had just heard from Shreveport. The printing house had called to say they were engaged in setting the type on the Prince story. They figured it would take about four weeks to turn out the printed pages and about the same length of time for the Dallas house to bind the books. I asked him if he thought we should begin casting about for contacts for proper contacts with the movies but he said he thought we could let that go for a while. My thought is that the contacts should be established now so that when first copy of the book comes off the press, there will be the right addresses to hand to establish contacts with the material immediately.

It comes to mind that I think I did a column devoted to the story the Prince a number of years ago, and, if memory serves, that was several years before James undertook doing the same story. I recall having inserted something about Foster's Mound in my account, an episode which seems to me was perfect for the theatre, --the surprising encounter of the Prince with Dr. Cox after all the years be their African days and their Hatcher reunion. That episode does not occur in James's version and I think it might be well to bring it to the attention of the movie makers, should the story ever get that far in the entertainment world.

Mrs. Walker called to ask if she might come down tomorrow early in the afternoon to bring me some things and to say farewell since she is departing on Saturday. I hold the thought she will not bring of duffle with her as, from what she said, she is contemplating doing.

And now that the Republicans have had their say, I am content to fold up my beard, exhausted as any convention delegate, and get a dab of sleep.....

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Tuesday, August 6th, 1979.

Memorandum:

The weather continues to be the thing, --thing being us as Weeks Hall was forever using it, --"thing" being almost any implication one cares to ascribe to it.

Today was very hot and very humid. It was cloudless until supper time, the sunshining when we went to supper, the vens dumping 120 tons to the acre before we had had a second biscuit. Two inches of rain came down about a mile either side of a line running slap through this bend of the river without a drop up or down the road outside the 2 mile wide strip.

Mrs. Walker had asked if she might come early-- 1:30. She might.....but she didn't. By 2:30, however, she had made it and for the ensuing 2 and a half hours was busily engaged in trying to drum mechanical operation of a gift she had brought for me. It is a compact little tape recorder, contrived by the Japanese, -- believe. It filled me with awe, wonder and frustration, so many gadgets all compressed into one little box, perhaps 10 by 12 inches and 2 or less inches thick. There are wheels and and things to push down and pull up and all so small that the sighted might have to do considerable squinting to take it all in. For a person like me, the most impressive element in the make-up is a little window set into the thing. If one can see, one may catch sight of a red needle and a black and one had better keep an eye on them, although through such a window I can see nothing as, since red and black are both black in my way of looking at things, the difference in the coloring registers not at all. Then there is a lot of b about the tape and how one should manage it if it goes this instead of that way, etc., etc., etc. and Mrs. Walker who loves gadgetry asked if I would kindly communicate with her by tape as she had purchased a like recorder for herself so that, along with the many envelopes provided bearing her Florida address, all I have to do, should I care to communicate with her, is to make a recording, remove it from the machine inset tape in an envelope, all stamped, and drop it in the mail. I should add that the machine works on batteries which is another but minor point when the batteries play out but the red and black needles will



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indicate when there is no more juice and one may secure fresh batteries. --four are required, which are obtainable, I believe, in this country.

The lady was disappointed that another gift she had ordered for me had not arrived, -- a reading machine. She thought it would always be nice to have an extra reading machine if the phone company was going to take a month to repair the one belonging to the Library of Congress went out of commission and required so many weeks for being made ship-shape. Ho.....hum.....

The downpour coming at close of day, the first time I had a moment to myself, I could not secure the services of a secretary and so the three or four letters coming to hand by today's post had to be put aside against the morrow.

Today's post also brought me a letter I had mailed a few days ago. It was returned, not for inadequate address but rather because there is a ban on all mail for Canada these days, due to a postal strike currently in progress in the land of our neighbors to the North. From something I heard on the radio tonight, I got the impression the strike might be expected to be over almost any day now and then I shall put the returned letter, all sealed, inside another new envelope, and post it again to Mr. Andressen or whatever the spelling of that gentleman's name, the one who used to be head of the Louisiana Archives Department but is now with the library of the Canadian Railroads.

Tonight I listened to most of the doings on the radio out of Miami Beach although it was evident that tonight's session of the Republican convention would be on the dull side. I liked the speed with which Tom Dewey delivered his oration but found the statements too twisted as to facts to make it interesting except as an example of how political speeches can stress the negative approach to things but dwelling on distortions and half truths. The Gerald Ford speech, as to be expected, was too biased to be interesting. But I liked the performance put on by the senior Senator from Illinois. It was his voice some CBS commentator once referred to as "coonskin cap". But like F. D. R and Alexander Scourby, Senator D. could read a telephone book and by sheer delivery, make it wonderfully entertaining.

And tomorrow night, the conventioners will name Mr. Nixon standard bearer and that will be it for the 1968 convention....

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Wednesday, August 7th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and drenchingly humid but, for a wonder, no rain. It cleared off for a while tonight to give one a glimpse of the moon but clouds and rain are promised for the morrow.

There was a variation in the domestic pattern today when Doreatha sent word that a fever was keeping her indoors. It meant the clerk and I with the assistance of August would breakfast in the big house, dine across the fence at noon and each have his own individual private picnic at home when the supper hour arrived.

At dinner J. H. announced he was going to Baton Rouge on the morrow to attend an R.E.A. meeting and would be seeing Stephen. I picked up the hint and asked if that meant he would be happy to take along some fresh vegetables from the garden for his brother. He grinned and said that would be fine. The rains, of course, have slowed down production in the realm of the vegetables but there will be enough to make a fine basket of fresh things, --okra, various kinds of peppers, some special snap beans, eggplant and so on.

J. H. will be accompanied by Lull Hankins, Henry Lemoyne and Ab. Wood and they plan to leave here at 7 thereby making it imperative that I comb the garden in ample time before take off.

I wasted a great deal of time tonight listening to all that tomfoolery going on in Miami Beach. With the outcome so obvious, there is no need to keep tuned in on the selection of Mr. Nixon as the Party candidate but I find listening to the passing show enlightening as to how much time people can afford to throw away at such a gathering.

With all the talk about efficiency among big business men, it does seem quaint enough that they should spend hours, for instance, nominating favorite sons and publicity greedy politi



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talking endlessly in nominating speeches for people who will never get a vote and then wearing themselves and everybody else out by adding to the hubbub by making as many as four speeches seconding the original motion which nobody can possibly care about except those doing the talking who of course are entranced at the opportunity to hear their own voices and get their images on the TV screens.

I am thankful that the people manipulating the TV camera have the good sense to let the cheaper politicians go on talk without giving them the attention of the cameras so that TV or radio men can move about in the convention hall and interview various prominent members of the audience who don't seem to have much to say but who at least save one from listening to all the beating of the air by the endless nominators and seconders on the podium.

On the local front a great deal of talk goes on about the identity of the person who did the cutting on Cake last Sunday morning. I suppose perhaps that only the person actually using the knife knows the identity of the killer but those closest to the scuffle seem to think that it was Heenie, one time bride of Jack Morris, although the deed can readily be pinned on her nephew who was present since KaFinley has already served a stretch at Angola and somehow prison doors probably swing more readily for those who have been there before.

Going back to the Miami Beach thing, it seems to me that letting Mr. Eisenhower make the speech on the opening night of the convention was most short-sighted. For a man in the hospital with an acute heart condition to make a nation wide TV speech for any occasion whatsoever, and most of all a political thing, somehow represents the height of folly if one has any regard at all for the health of the patient. But I see such odd expenditures of strength just across the fence with relatives and the patient himself seemingly less concerned about all that is involved. I feel I can the more readily appreciate all the forces involved in the Eisenhower matter. Of course the attack the ex-resident suffered a few hours after making the speech only goes to confirm the short-sightedness of the man himself, his family, his physicians and all concerned.

And so the political doings takes another step in the direction of the impending campaign and how wonderfully quiet it is once election day has come and gone.....

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Thursday, August 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid and the inevitable rain.

As I was returning from the store around 3 this afternoon when the heavens opened just as I came along side the old magnolia by the side gate. Nimble, but not nimble enough to avoid the initial downpour, I jumped into that little building there by the side gate, thinking I could wait out the shower which probably wouldn't be long. But the tempo of the deluge increased and I had to make up my mind which might be preferable, remaining under cover in that hot house and be eaten alive by the mosquito hordes therein or step outside and get drowned.

I finally decided that drowning was more promising and so I stepped outside and waded to Yucca, looking like something just fished out of the rain barrel when arriving on the Yucca gallery.

And so I removed all raiment and stepped into the bathtub for an extra rinse. As I reached for a towel, a big bottle of insect standing on the shelf above the tub, fell. It landed on the edge of the tub, scattering glass equally inside and outside the tub and there I stood, not high and dry but low and wet.

The thunder rolled mightily for about an hour and exactly one inch of rain registered in the gauge.

It didn't rain much either up or down the river but the electricity in the Bermuda was devastating. One man up there was in the hayfield when the storm broke. He sought protection under a tree and was killed by a mighty bolt that ripped the tree itself in twain.

By four o'clock the sun was shining merrily and the momentary coolness induced by the rain had departed and we were all basking in mid 90 degree temperature once more. The prediction for the morrow is "widely scattered showers".

I listened to Mr. Nixon's acceptance speech tonight and thought it delivered with remarkable effectiveness.

I was not surprised to hear that Governor Agnew



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reported himself as being "stunned" when the news reached him during the day that Mr. Nixon had signified he wanted Mr. Agnew to be his running mate.

Chet Huntley reported that the Agnew selection, he feared, represented a tremendous blunder. According to some commentators, Mr. Nixon made deal with southern "Republicans", especially Strom Thurman of South Carolina, who is, I believe, listed as a Republican, with the understanding that if the southern politicians would vote of the Nixon candidacy to edge out Rockefeller, Nixon would name Agnew as his preference for the Vice Presidency. It would appear that Nixon and Republicans are weakest in the Northeast and Middle West where the population figures give the greatest number of votes in the electoral college. What the party needed most is a man from that area or popular, at least, in that area but instead of that Nixon gave the nod to Agnew, unpopular among the younger branch of the Republican party and anathema to people in the Northeast and West.

From now on through the campaign, it is surmised that Nixon and his Republican Party is going to be afflicted with Agnew Ague.

I rather like that expression, -- Agnew ague. I wasn't sure about the spelling of the latter word and it still seems to me in one language or another I have seen it spelled with an i, ague. But, out of sheer curiosity, I wanted to settle the matter of the spelling in my own mind and accordingly phoned the Parish library. The person there who usually lends me a hand was on vacation and when I asked the clerk on the wire just how "a g u e" or "a i g u e" might be spelled properly, the clerk growled "H u h h h" and vanished, giving way to another person who started off by asking me if it had something to do with marine life. I said I thought not. I am still wondering how "A I G U E" still sticks in my mind when the dictionary, I am told, clearly states it as being ague.

It seems, as I recall the mean from old times, that it has to do with the fever accompanying colds but whatever it is, it would seem that until November at least, the Nixon forces are going to be suffering from Agnew ague and that is that.

I haven't communicated with Natalie, assuming she is busy with Saturday wedding plans. Carmen is at home, down with a cold and upset stomach and Mrs. Walker is lost in packing preparations for Saturday departure for Florida.....

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Friday, August 9th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Steamy with occasional glimpses of sunshine all day. Hatchiteches got the rain today, a full inch around noon but we received only a vague little old sprinkle. Between 7 and 9 this evening, big clouds and loud thunder rattled around over Derry, moved east then north, circled back westward into the Bermuda area and then finally vanished and a lovely moon took over the skies.

Under date of August 9th, Time magazine runs an article on Vaux-l-Vicomte. There are illustrations, I am told, but as yet I have not seen the article.

I. S. Willard mentioned it and very kindly ran through the piece over the phone. At the time there was considerable static on the wire and a couple of interruptions, not to mention "e r r r r r r s" a h h h h h s and o h h h h h s" and accordingly I am a little uncertain as to some of the phrases. I was surprised to hear that Vatel had been in the service of the King. This must be an error since, I feel sure, the King would never have relinquished Vatel from his household, had he ever been a part of it and it in the service of the Prince de Conde, I believe, that Vatel concluded his career.

The way the article read, I got the impression that in 1875, when the roofs were caving in, Monsieur Sommier purchased the chateau and moved it. Something tells me that the new owner, undertaking a 30 year restoration, didn't actually move in while the roof was caving in. But these are phrases of no importance and may be dismissed as just that. It is so good to know the place is being maintained and that visitors may now make pilgrimages to this remarkable estate which has so long eluded the mere fact that it ever existed so far as so many people are concerned.

A phone call from the Hatchiteches lady tonight at 9, indicates the lady and her mama are expecting the moving van tomorrow morning and the two



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Ladies and the son hope to head out for Floriday on the morrow -- sometime. Once minor complication in the plans was merely a potential uncertainty. This afternoon the son took his grandmother to the home of his girl friend for to the mother of the boy arrived a little while after the son and grandmother had approached the teacups. It seems the grandmother who now weighs 88 pounds, had requested a martini which hit her with a bang. When they got back to their apartment, the grandmother crashed to the floor and passed out but the daughter thinks she was not and hopes a good breakfast on the morrow my bring her around. was one point about the trip that wasn't clear to me but I did not inquire about it, assuming everybody, or almost everybody concerned, may have settle everything perfectly. The point in question that a leisurely trip is planned, perhaps 250 miles per day so that at about three nights will be spent along the way and yet the ladies plan to be at their destination before the moving van which, supposedly, is leaving Hatchitoches the same day they do. Something tells me the moving van is going to cover more than 250 miles a day. The lady has made a double set of numbers from 1 to 13, the number of rooms in the new residence they are to occupy. She plans to tape a number on each door of the several rooms and a like number on the several packing cases so that the movers may place the cases in the rooms corresponding to the aforesaid numbers. As it appears at present that the ladies will not arrive at their destination for days after the movers have arrived and unloaded, it would appear this numbers game will be a little out of hand but I am sure they will solve all that before they have proceeded very far in the direction toward which they are heading.

I was glad to hear on tonight's news cast that the postal in Canada is over and the ban of mail in that direction has been lifted so that I may again put into the mail the letter address in that direction, following its return after the first posting several days back.

So often during the past several days I have been thinking about the vacationers, holding the thought that weather may have been fine and the surroundings altogether pleasant. I am holding the thought, too, that little Miss Lee may find an opportunity to catch her breath, once back home, before undertaking too much arduous labor immediately after touching home base again.....

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Sunday, August 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, warm and humid, both in the 90's.

Saturday afternoon it rained in the Bermuda area where, across the river from Beau Fort, they were burying Coke. There was endless thunder all around this bend of the river but I think it did not rain. But it made up for lost time this morning when it dumped a little more than 2 inches between 10 and 12.

This noon across the fence I ran into a classic example of a story without a shred of truth in it, leading me to wonder, as I always do when confronted by such examples, how such statements get started. Mine hostess asked me, while we were speaking of doings at Miami Beach during the past week, if I knew Mrs. Walker attended the convention. I responded negatively and expressed my doubts about the story. I was told that the facts spoke for themselves as one or another of friends at yesterday's card game in town mentioned having seen Mrs. Walker on TV at the Miami Beach convention. I said I couldn't imagine how she could have been there since I had talked with her at her Hatchitoches phone on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday about packing matters, that she had dropped in to see me either Wednesday or Thursday and that she had called me from Hatchitoches on Friday night. Over the years everybody, I suppose, has in one way or another been involved in adventures or misadventures in cases of mistaken identity. The one I remember best happened in Manhattan. Two society matrons were chatting on the phone one morning when the one who had put through the call confided to her friend that she had seen me the night before at a dinner party where something extraordinary had happened during the course of the evening. She was told in response that she must have been mistaken about my presence there but the caller declared she couldn't possibly have been in error since I sat next to her at the dinner. That seemed to seal the matter completely except that the lady to whom she was reporting the doings had spend the night before in Tarrytown with her son and daughter and me. It all reminds me, and especially Mrs. Walker at Miami Beach this past week that "one should believe nothing one hears and only half what one sees" --including TV.



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Natalie 'phoned tonight. She said yesterday's wedding of her son somewhere in south Louisiana, went off beautifully. I suppose she and her husband returned last night and probably their daughter, too, for the daughter and her husband with a busload of children headed out in the general direction of Chicago today at noon. As the Convention doesn't get going for a couple of weeks, I suppose they plan to make a leisurely journey. I forget how many children there are, perhaps seven and as one counts one's blessings, one can readily imagine express gratitude to the Almighty that one thus counting may do well to be not on that trip.

It was pleasant to receive a 'phone call Saturday afternoon from Miss Denholme. She had been to see Carrie and found her full of vim and vigor and determined to get back to Briarwood just as soon as possible. I can well imagine that by now Carrie's niece may cooperate with her aunt in that project for I can imagine Carrie can be pretty adamant about what she wants to do. As I understand it, Carrie's kneecap was not broken but cracked which explains why the cast was removed so soon. In the course of the conversation, the speaker mentioned something about being the eldest leaf on her family's tree, --81, which surprised me since I never think about ages and should never have imagined R. D. as having marshalled such an imposing figure.

It only dawned on me the other day that Kristin Nelson is a daughter-in-law of Harriet and Arzie Nelson who used to be so popular on the radio back in the 1930's. I have heard TV enthusiasts speak of the children of Arzie and Harriet as being so popular in TV shows but somehow it never occurred to me that Kristin was a part of that gifted family.

Mention of the Nelsons reminds me of Miss Hunter. James called Saturday afternoon to ask if the artist had brought me a picture. She had not. He said he had passed by her house Wednesday, had seen something he knew I would like for the West Coast and asked the artist to send it over to me.

So things turn and I hope everybody is Lyme is back at home base, all safe and sound.....

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Monday, August 12th, 1968.

Memorandum:

The curious weather pattern continues, shower after shower. At this bend of the river we had none during the afternoon while water was submerging the highway in the St. Mathew's area between Melrose and Bermuda. About 5 this evening, however, the big old thunderheads rolled in with a prolonged electrical performance that drowned out radio reception and at the same time dumped an inch and a half of rainwater. But we were lucky since some places a little to the south received 3 inches in a single downpour.

It seems the whole storm system covering the Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi area is operating differently this summer than ever before for in summer it is usually dry in all these States and usually dry-dry. At 10 o'clock tonight I listened to one report that reported during the past 24 hours Baton Rouge had received 5 inches of rain, Alexandria 4, Oklahoma City 3, Dallas 3 and so on and the prediction is for widely scattered showers on the morrow.

One naturally expects the cotton farmers to be complaining about this amount of moisture but now the planters have been joined in their complaints by the preachers-- of all people, --Natchitoches Parish divines complaining that it is so rainy they can't carry out their baptisin' plans since it is only the converts and not the balance of the people attending such festivities who want to get soaked.

Carmen called me today. She has been at home for a few days flattened out by some kind of a cold and stomach distemper which seems to be making the rounds in this general area. I have heard of two or three families who have had their plans for a vacation knocked out because of this affliction which doesn't seem to put anybody in the hospital but which makes traveling unthinkable. I believe it is tomorrow that the Chopins return from their



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week's vacation to Toldeo, Ohio, where they journeyed to attend the wedding of the oldest boy. I was surprised that so many of them made the trip in one car, a station wagon, I believe. I think there were 7 or 8 or possibly 9 who drove from New Orleans, perhaps 6 or 7 grown-ups and 3 children, the youngest being least than a year old. That would be one type of vacation I, for one, could readily skip without any regrets.

In yesterday's memo I forgot to mention something Natalie had told me on Sunday's phone conversation that had to do with the new tape recorder. One day, week when Natalie was pretty well tangled up with festivities revolving around her son's marriage, she received a phone call from Mrs. Walker, asking her to come over to her apartment on an important matter. It was difficult for Natalie to get away but she made it. What was important, according to Mrs. Walker, was that Natalie was to receive instructions from her then and there on the operation of the tape recorder so that, after it had been delivered to me and I struck a sag, Natalie could come down and set me and the machine to rights. Natalie says she understands mechanical things not at all and told Mrs. Walker as much but that didn't matter. And so she received the instructions and was commanded to demonstrate just how the thing should be operated and Natalie fumbled around and proved more or less conclusively that the thing was quite beyond her. That did not dismay Mrs. Walker, however, who said that if the thing got beyond both Natalie, me and the Lord, the machine could always be taken to town and have an expert handle it. We both laughed at how much good our combined efforts would accomplish, should we attack the machine jointly. In today's post came a message from Mrs. Walker in the form of a tape. Were it only the standard type of tape, I could manage it readily enough on little Miss Lee's machine but this is some special type of tape that will play only on the particular machine.

During these rainy times, so devastating on the vegetable garden I have been thinking of the old adage: "It's an ill wind that doesn't blow somebody good". By some miracle, we are still getting tomatoes, peppers,okra and so on but in modest amounts but the butterfly lilies were never so gorgeous.....

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Tuesday, August 13th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Our watery weather continues although our moisture today has been confined to sprinkles rather than the copious showers just above and below in the Bermuda and Derry areas.

One thing about all the dampness around and about is the fact that it gives the field hands a larger measure of leisure than is usual in most dry Julys and Augusts. The fact that little work allows scant spending tends to put a crimp in expenditures such as road running, honkey-tonk extravagances and so on but it does offer opportunities to look up likely cabins temporarily unoccupied and ample opportunity to move about with one's goods and chattels with reasonable assurance that one may have lots of help in the various movings.

It was Neenie Baptist Morris who felt the impulse to seek a new habitation today and move she did. It was in her house a week ago last Saturday that her nephew, McKinley Brown, and Coke and Coke's sister Neenie herself, along with Neenie's child, who were present when Coke was "stabbed". In consequence of Coke's demise, Neenie now finds that she cannot live in that particular house, --the self same house where Miss Hunter lived some dozen years back, just below the spillway. And so Neenie, "to get away from it all", decided there was no place like the quiet of Little River, a locality sparsely populated at the moment. She rounded up two or three idle gentlemen who borrowed a truck from somebody and transported all the plunder from the Cane River area to the Little River neighborhood, some couple of miles away. Neenie is afraid Coke may come back and pay her a visit if the house where he died but she feels reasonably sure he will never make a round when she lives as far away as Little River. Now everybody who knows Neenie is betting about her return to Cane River and whether it will be tomorrow or if it may not be until Friday. It must have been about a year I was writing a piece under some such title as "Dog Days" which Neenie was appearing as a triflin' mama with a triflin' offspring.



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I was rather expecting to receive a call from Natalie tonight to run through a column which she had mentioned as a possibility of taking care of before her departure for Minnesota or where ever on Thursday. As she will be returning on Saturday, however, it will not make any difference about rushing into that business.

I was glad to hear from Mrs. Chapin a little after 9 tonight. She reported having had a fine trip and was impressed by the fact that along the way, she and her party had spent one night in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and the next night in Bowling Green, Ohio. She remarked that the Ohio weather had been fine but on the way back home, they had encountered more and more rain and it had been pouring when they left New Orleans this morning and they had driven through continuous downpours all the way until they reached Alexandria. I believe sugar cane thrives during wet summers, leading one to assume that this year's crop ought to be a bumper.

I. W. Willard called this afternoon with lots to say of much of interest to pass along. She mentioned having attended the Saturday luncheon Kay gave at 209 South Williams and went into some detail about the menu which sounded toothsome enough. I didn't inquire as to the list of guests which undoubtedly was made up of ladies only.

I hear of various people, all ladies, heading out for Las Vegas, according to custom. I believe it was yesterday that Dee Hertzog and Nez Chaplin started out for the western gaming tables or a ten day outing. Most people from this area seem to fly rather than drive and I Dee and Nez flew. Of all the places there are for vacation it does seem odd that so many people from this area look forward with such eagerness for the time to come to make the Las Vegas pilgrimage.

It seems to me there was some mention of the Coke murder on the front page of last Thursday's paper. I shall tear off the page and enclose it. I have forgotten what Coke's real name is but in a region where so many people have been known for years by names other than their real ones, one is lucky if one recognizes any. I believe Bud appears as McKinley Brown and Neenie as Alma, but whether you chance to see the news item really doesn't matter. The deplorable facts are too well known to make recognition of actual people comparatively unimportant....

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Wednesday, August 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, warm and humid. It sprinkled only a few times today in the immediate neighborhood but torrents descended from on high all the way from Hatchitaches to Bermuda.

But if the clouds couldn't part to reveal some clear blue sky, the postman could hand me a sunbeam in the form of a card carrying the likeness of a pretty bird on one side and the message twice as beautiful as the bird.

I shall be awaiting further particulars about the outing, holding the thought it provided all that a change of environment is said to hold, not to mention oceans of bracing breezes and huge appetite and all that goes to satisfy same.

James called tonight to say he has been mighty busy these past three days even as many another property owners living along the margin of Cane River in the neighborhood of town. In view of all the rains, the City Fathers sent out men with pikes to push into the banks on both sides of the stream to see if the slopes leading down to the water's edge were being effected by the cloudbursts. Every place a pike was inserted, water gushed out like geysers, much to the surprise of nobody. To replace the soil at 406, washed away last week, James had a crew of men bring tons of earth to fill up the places and was enchanted not at all when more showers descended, washing away all that had been brought in. But he persisted in calling for more and more earth and today the workmen somehow succeeded in mixing it with quick harden cement and now he feels the wash-out has been discouraged.

He mentioned having enjoyed a comparatively new book by Cleveland Armory, the title of which I have forgot but it seems to be about the people who caused American society to peter out. It seems to me I read something by the same author about Boston a few years back and, as I recall, I enjoyed the Amory touch enormously.



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At dinner today we had the first pumpkin pie of the season. Doreatha made a sufficient number of pies so that I might have some to grace the ice box against a midnight snack toward which I am looking with infinite pleasure. Pumpkins, of course, and I'm thinking of the vines especially, simply can't stand up under much moisture and there has been so much of the latter that the vines are no more but the fruit of the vines remains and although none of them had reached imposing proportions, some of them are the size of a basket ball and that goes a long way toward providing adequate ingredients for a midnight snack.

The Gourd Society had sent me some seeds of some large African gourds which I have planted several different times within the past four months. They all started off well enough but, like the pumpkin vines, they simply couldn't survive the unending rains. There is one solitary vine that happened to get started at just the right time that has somehow survived and I shall be curious to see if it still can escape drowning and what sort of fruit it will bring forth.

A while back, after receiving the list of the one hundred slides from Louisiana Heritage, I wrote requesting date of release of the slides, prices and so on, assuming, naturally that with the lists being mailed out, the merchandise and information concerning it might be to hand. And as I write that, I recall that I don't remember having seen the Heritage named stamped on the list bearing the one hundred titles including the "beday". Be that as it may, there was a letter in today's post giving none of the information requested although in my original letter, I had pointed out that I should like to have certain particulars so I might write a column about this forthcoming dab of merchandise. Since it did not come to hand by the end of last week, I went ahead and knocked off an article regardless although it might serve better if it could have contained some of the particulars requested. It's odd how many business letters seem to be lacking in content pertaining to business.

So runeth the day and so I must run my fingers up and down this keyboard a few times to have some letters for tomorrow's outgoing post, happy the while, what with my pretty bird sitting here on my desk beside me, a constant reminder of the happiness today's post brought.....

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Thursday, August 15th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy to partly cloudy, temperature and humidity in the 90's and only one little old sprinkle around noon. It rained up the road but, in spite of predictions for 40 percent chance for rain on the morrow, today's respite gives one courage to hope the daily deluge may be broken.

Life magazine came two days late this week and Thursday's Hatchitoches paper didn't come at all. Perhaps Life was held up for Republican convention pictures. I thought the ones in color of all the balloons or balloons were pretty and the ones of the Nixons and Agnews were pretty, too.

Although today's Hatchitoches Times did not arrive here, I learned from Carmen that it carried quite an account of the Williams wedding held in New Orleans last Saturday. When the paper does come to hand, I shall put it in the mail for little Miss Lee on the theory that she might enjoy glancing through the wedding particulars in which her friend participated.

I was interested in the show the eggplant is putting on at the moment. Although the stems holding the fruit of the eggplant are tough, there is something about excessive moisture that loosens the fruit from the stem, letting the beautiful purple globes tumble into the mud. I found half a dozen between the rows today, all about the size of baseballs. But the plants themselves, seemingly unimpaired of all the recent dews and damps, or, perhaps, because of all this moisture and because they have been denied their regular production of fruit, have suddenly started putting out masses of flowers as though determined to make up for lost time. It will be interesting to see, should fair weather ensue, if and how many of these flowers will metamorphose into fruit. If many of them do, they ought to produce such weight as will pull down the plants and take on the appearance of vine producing purple pumpkins.



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It occurred to me the other day that I have heard nothing about American tourists in Europe this summer and I'm wondering if the news media which I do not contact may have had anything to say on this matter. Off hand, I cannot think of anyone in this area having mentioned plans to travel in that direction although every year it seems to me I know several people who make the grand tour. In recent years two or three travel agencies in Louisiana have sponsored programs about the charms of European trips but I haven't heard one of them in 1968. As a matter of fact, I can think of but one person in the Gulf States area who has ventured overseas, --Pie DuFour of the Times Picayune and in view of the reports filed with his newspaper during his absence, I take it he was on some kind of an assignment. It seems to me I have heard the radio refer to certain hotels and restaurants simply closed down during the souffles going on in Paris in May. Whether they ever re-opened for the summer tourist season, I have never heard. Even though the Americans remained home, it would seem as though there would be enough Europeans, especially those living on the Continent, who might easily fill in the vacant spaces if the Americans appeared in reduced numbers.

Perhaps any Americans in any way connected with official business made it a point to avoid the land of Tall Charlie, as seems to have been the case when Louisiana's Governor McKeithin and some Pelican State officials journeyed abroad on the excuse they were going to try selling European firms the advantages of locating in Louisiana. I cannot imagine any European firm that would be influenced in the slightest by such a group of State politicians and I am still under the impression that it was merely an excuse for a frolic that the local politicians used to get a free trip paid out of public funds.

As for American travel, it does seem quite a few people are chasing up and around North America. As for Mildred and what Alaska might hold by way of interest for her, I cannot imagine. On the other hand, Mrs. Chapman's youngest child, a college freshman, left out early this morning by car with a boyfriend to drive to San Francisco and back within 8 or 10 days to see Grand Canyon and take a dip in the Pacific which certainly covers a lot of mileage in a short time, shorter, perhaps, than those 21 day tours of Europe.....

15660

15660

Friday, August 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Mostly cloudy and altogether humid but only a tenth of an inch of rain in spite of all the rattling bouncing about in the heavens.

Great was my delight in finding a letter as of Wednesday from little Miss Lee in today's post. I am so glad to have such a series of vignettes giving glimpses of the vacation which, in spite of the weather occasionally on the damp side, may well have held segments of relaxation even though there was scant if any opportunity to tune in on interesting reports tumbling out of the boxes of the news media during the outing.

It is good to know there were items of interest awaiting the return to Lyme interruption.....

That was a 'phone call from Leesburg. The lady wanted to report that they and the furniture had arrived and everyone was tired from the trip and the subsequent unpacking of furniture. She said her mother had lost some weight which wasn't surprising. She asked me to call some lady in town, the mother of her son's girl-friend, a duty I shall perform on the morrow.

I am so glad you got an opportunity to skim through the Dixie-Rate article you mentioned. The settlement in the Minden area is called Gibbsland, I believe. Some lady from up yonder used to visit here occasionally. Her name eludes me at the moment although I suppose I may have mentioned her at one time or another. At one time she was all tangled up with Clare Booth Luce in sufferagette doings before the vote was conferred on ladies.

I may have had something to say 10 or 15 years ago about the Minden-Gibbsland settlement and some



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unwritten details about the pause the company of immigrants made in Natchitoches when their boat in the 1830's paused a while at Grand Ecure. It was little Miss Julie Prudhomme, niece of the original Lestan, who told me many of the details and I showed me two oil paintings in her home, canvases painted by one or another member of the 1830 visitors. I remember at the time the efforts I made to convey the information that I should be interested in them and a couple of hand-colored prints of Louis XIV and his mama but I never got the idea across and now Miss Julie has departed this life and her home is up for sale and where the several pictures went is anybody's guess. Miss Julie was a sister of Clotilde, --Mrs. Hughes whom little Miss Lee may have met once upon a time in Lyme, since it seems to me Lester and Clotilde attended some kind of an E. A. thing in the Lyme area when my neighbors did.

And speaking of my neighbors, mine hostess this morning at the coffee hour suddenly remembered that she had learned yesterday of the death of Blythe's sister, --Willie White. I believe Miss Willie had been in the hospital sometime before Blythe had her accident. It was said that Blythe's eldest son, Paul King Rand, was in Alexandria for the funeral.

Mine hostess was happy at the prospect of a busy day on the morrow. She will go to a wedding in the morning and attend the reception at high noon after which at 1:30 she will go on to 208 South Williams to have lunch with Kay who has also invited Mrs. C. Vernon Cloutier, I. S. Willard among others. It was interesting to note the reports of the luncheon from a couple of viewpoints since I am sure my neighbor and I. S. W. will offer detailed accounts of the festivities. I assume there will be no gentlemen present and I'm quite sure the hostess will be having lots of things to do on Saturday afternoon such as, for example, giving Lestan a buzz.....

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Sunday, August 18th, 1966.

Memorandum:

90-ish in temperature and humidity with two inches of rain on Saturday and none at all today.

Knowing little Miss Lee as you do, you are bound to agree with me that she is truly an extraordinary person. Her Saturday post, dated Thursday, filled me with delight and amazement, that with the copies of Wildcat on the mound having been tracked down, copied and enclosed with such neatness and dispatch. I simply couldn't believe my senses to find so many treasures in both letters and enclosures in these two weekend letters and naturally I am filled with gratitude of which I trust you will speak to her the first time you see her.

I haven't had an opportunity to run through the Wildcat story which I had utterly forgotten as having been presented under such a caption. I am wondering if this article should be placed in the preferred list as we select columns for eventual inclusion in the manuscript for a book made up of some of the more interesting ones. Natalie has spoken of the desirability of making such a choice with a view for presenting them to Claiter for publication. I find myself wondering if it might be well to approach the Squire's wife to back such a publication, not by Claiter, but by the same house that is doing the Squire's opus.

And may little Miss Lee be advised eventually of my appreciation also sent along this past week concerning Vatel. Slowly but very slowly I am getting that biography straightened out in my mind, all mixed-up as it has been by memories of fictional presentations of segments of his life run across intertwined accounts appearing in novels of a hundred years back. I continue trying to secure some kind of a clear image in my own mind of Fouquet. Anyone who had the intelligence to surround himself with such a galaxy of stars as did he and anyone who accomplished so much as did he is bound to have been a wonderful person and I am hoping someday to get a proper perspective on all his accomplishments.



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And I am so glad to have the clipping from Holiday containing letter from the Curator of Versailles to the publisher of that magazine. The curator somehow carries such an unexpected name. And thanks, too, for particulars regarding the career and tragic death of Mr. Rockefeller's Art adviser. There was something about him having been run down by a drunken bag that reminded me of the death of Margaret Mitchell, --both having been such accomplished people and both obviously having been destroyed by such no-account trash.

The weekend was cluttered up with plenty of people coming and going. My neighbor across the fence reported having had a darling luncheon at 209 South Williams. J. H. dined with the clerk and me on Saturday noon. I guess all of us were equally amazed when, for the first time within a couple of years, Joe Henry came to the big house and called for dishes and eating instruments when we half through with our meal. Perhaps five minutes later, Juanita A. appeared and a place was prepared for her. Why they had arrived separately, I don't know and why they had come at all is equally mystifying. In the afternoon some ladies from Jasper, Tex. were bounced into my lap. The rains started just after they arrived so we had quite a prolonged session and all three of us enjoyed a little gathering.

Just as the merchant-planter, his wife and I sat down to dinner today across the fence, there was a knock at the door. It was Mat Chopin, husband of Mrs. Chopin. He lives in Alexandria and had had Hunter Pierson's daughter drive him to this area, stopping first here and thence on to Oakland, or at least that is where he said he was going, and thence on to 1 o'clock dinner with Cousin Arthur in town. I hastened back home as soon as I could after demi-tasse to 'phone Mrs. Chopin to let her know of the possibility she might have in seeing her husband and later she called me to express thanks for the warning as it provided her with an opportunity to fly out of the house before anyone put in an appearance.

Saturday's post brought a letter from Miss Dormon. I have it with some un-sorted papers and will send it along in a day or so. I had written her before Miami Beach I hoped Mr. Rockefeller would get the nod. She denounced me for favoring him and said going to vote of Nixon, showing how her mind works since the Democrats haven't even named their candidate yet but that's Dr. Dormon all over.....

12004

15664

Sunday, August 19th, 1938.

Memorandum:

Humidity and temperature in the 90's but -- and it's difficult to believe, there was no rain.

Natalie called tonight. She reported a fine trip, enjoyed the services, saw her daughter and the latter's family and got back home safe and sound Saturday night.

She reported an accident that had happened to one of their friends, occurring on the river Saturday night. When Charles Cunningham and wife went to Europe on the Queen Elizabeth cruise a year or two ago, they were accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Grace. The Graces came up to Hatchitoches from Baton Rouge on Saturday to visit the Cunninghams and toward evening they went out for a cruise in or on Charles' barge. When passing the home of Cousin Arthur whom the Graces know, they thought it would be nice to pause to say Howdy. The dock or landing place is of rocks and Mr. Grace did not wait for the boat to touch shore but, instead, leaped off, landing on his head on the rocks below. He did not kill him but it knocked him out, of course, and he was rushed to the hospital where many stitches had to be taken. He remained under sedation until Sunday morning when he was taken back to Baton Rouge where it is expected he will be sometime recuperating.

Hunter Pierson called me from Alexandria this noon. He told me the Theatre Guild is making "The Slave" and that either or both of the Philip Langer are in it. Philip is the son of Lawrence Langer who, before his death some years ago, was one of the big wheels in the Theatre Guild. I remember the Lawrence Langer in the '30's when the Guild was doing so many good things and numbered lots of good talent in their productions, people like Dudley Diggs, Paul Robeson, Helen Westley, Claudette Colbert, Thresa Hepburn and so on.



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Hunter wanted to make the visitation on Saturday afternoon. I told him I was not entranced at the prospect on such a day of the week never knowing how the set-up would be here but if he wanted to call me on Friday, I would see how the prospects looked then.

I mentioned something about his daughter having passed this way on Sunday with Mat Chapin. He said it was not his daughter but his secretary. I opined that that was even worse since a daughter might be excused for having the poor manners to drop in unannounced on anyone at noon but a secretary might be expected to have sufficient years to think twice about such a move even though he secret did not

You can readily see I was making the most of the opportunity to indicate to Hunter I was not on the verge of rushing around to kick out red carpets for anybody on weekends.

I asked him if he knew anything about the script for The Slave. He said he didn't. I said I did know something about it and unless it were greatly altered before being filmed or at least before being released, I thought it would cause sufficient stir to make a lot of people unhappy, especially the part about the triangle as between the planter and his wife when the mulatto mistress was introduced into the scene. He asked me how I knew about it. I told him by means of my radar, being careful not to mention John Kyser's name, of course.

On the national scene, it would appear General Eisenhower is gravely ill. I recall how a top military man had once confided how plans for the funerals of all important people ever connected with the Government -- plans for the of such people are always made well in advance, often years in advance and so I suppose preparations are long since set-up for any eventuality although one wonders if the present twist in the political picture will cause greater space to be allotted to Mr. Nixon because of his eight years of association with Mr. Eisenhower during their Presidency and Vice Presidency.

I had an opportunity to re-read some of the wonderful mail of weekend and once more I want to express my gratitude and admiration of to and for little Miss Lee.....

15666

15666

Tuesday, August 20th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with only a scant sprinkle this afternoon at this bend of the river while Bermuda was getting a soaker. A flow of warm air off the Gulf continues moving northward, striking a cold front, -- comparatively cold front, up Oklahoma way and this procedure explains, according to the Weather Bureau the unending absence of dryness in this area.

My day was cluttered up with people, some by appointment, some who somehow got by the supposed deflecting hand from the store. In the latter category were a couple of Highway Department people who hailed from Hammond. Aside from being the Strawberry Capital of the world, Hammond is vaguely hilly billy country and these two gentlemen were obviously hill billy hangers-on of the political machine down that way. They were pleasant enough but obviously in much deeper water than they could navigate comfortably. One of them told me how impossible it is to get it into the mind of youngsters what a difference there is in the races. To illustrate his point, he went on to say that where he lived the school children last year began using school buses without regard to color and on their return from school the first day, he asked them how they had made out on the bus with the colored youngsters. They replied blandly:

"On, everything went just fine. The colored children didn't seem to mind at all riding in the same bus with us white children."

On the State political front, the pot is boiling merrily. Over a Shreveport station today, there was an interview by telephone with Cousin Arthur who said he wasn't sure he was going to attend the Chicago convention in spite of the fact that he is Chairman of the State Democratic Committee.



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That is one of the understatement of the year since he has long since declared to people in private conversation that he had no intention of attending. He, like Cousin Leander, represents the extreme Conservative wing and very probably, like more than one of his kinsmen, hasn't voted Democratic tickets in years. The Governor is ~~in~~ hand in the matter of membership of the Committee and is coming, as is his right in this State, to designate committeemen which, of course, takes power out of the hands of the Conservative branch of the party and makes them furious.

Former Governor Sam Jones today announced he would support Nixon. This was quite understandable since Sam Jones has long handled legal business for the big corporations and, I believe, has long operated as a Democrat so far as party affiliation was concerned while actually supporting the Republican party. It all smacks of leger-de-main, of course and I am glad the Governor is taking a hand in the matter. In the case of the Democratic Party in Mississippi, it is notoriously true that the old "Dixie-hards" in Mississippi politics have continued for years, certainly ever since F. D. R. to carry on under the Democratic banner while actually doing everything possible to thwart any Democratic reforms over the years. I hope the so-called Mississippi delegation may be rejected by the Chicago Committee on membership.

It would appear that the Humphrey nomination is assured and I am rather surprised that the McCarthy segment of the Party is carrying its fight, not so much over credentials as over planks in the platform. I hope the McCarthy faction doesn't succeed in pulling the party asunder since that would only play into the hands of the Nixon group and I must say I haven't any enthusiasm for Nixon at all. Surely every one must want the Southeast Asia scuffle to be brought to a close as quickly as possible but Foreign Policy is something for the Government and not the politicians in Chicago to tamper with, it seems to me.

This afternoon I had half a dozen people of color who came by appointment. One of them, Mrs. Mallard with the accent on the second syllable, had once taught at St. Mathew's school but had never chanced to make a round here. It did one's soul good to see her enchantment with so many things and made me feel the hour spent with them was such a good investment.....

15668

15668

Wednesday, August 21st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Sometimes fair, sometimes cloudy but always warm and humid. It rained up Bermuda way this afternoon but it just missed us. It might do that same thing tomorrow if it cares to.

The surprise of the day was a visitation this afternoon from the Shreveport lady. I guess she arrived about 3 o'clock and was gone by 3:30 or 40. She had caught a ride to Hatchitoches with some lady, --Cousin Cora Maude Hicks, who had come to spend the day in town. Sister borrowed her sister-in-law's car, --that is to say June's car, June having gone fishing and that was that.

Thelma called between 7 and 8 this morning. She and a helper were canning pears. She said neither she nor John cared much for pears but since they had some, not to mention some brandy and stuff that introduced an un-pear like taste, she was putting up some against next winter. I inquired after John's good health and she said he was upset about the Russian invasion of Prague last night or this morning or whenever it was. It seemed to me I had heard something about it on the radio after folding up my beard last night but since I had expected it, I wasn't too much surprised when it actually happened.

Off hand, it struck me as bad news for everybody and in the long run, worse for the Russians since it would appear to me that it seldom is a sound investment for one country to hold another against its will since the cost of the holding process usually seems to cost more than the thing is worth but that is for the Russians to discover eventually. It is easy enough to see why Russia would like to maintain the line of buffer satellite States between herself and Western Europe but when the buffer States begin getting restive, it's going to require more expenditure to keep them in line than it would if they were given favorable trade treaties and allowed to keep tied to the Russian master for their own economic advantage.



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I made it a point to tune in on the Edward Kennedy speech this afternoon but I succeeded in getting only snatches because of atmospheric interference and too many interruptions by one person or another. I am hoping to catch up with a re-broadcast sometime tonight for it is a privilege to hear such a man speak although, I am quite frank to confess, I do not understand his position on Southeast Asia. What I have in mind is his suggestion that both the Americans and the guys North of the de-militarized zone withdraw their troops -- just like that. I had always supposed that was one of the difficulties, --getting the enemy to do anything. But I have not gone into one or two of those points thoroughly and I suppose there was an approach within possibility that I have missed somewhere along the way.

Mrs. Chopin called about 10 tonight to report that she had been to the Catholic school where bingo games are played once a week. She said she sat at a table with Natalie and her son, Richard, the latter having returned with his parents following the taking of vows in order to spend a couple of weeks vacation at home. They were joined further along in the evening by Natalie's son, John, not John but Joe-Payne or whatever they call him. He had his girl-friend with him, a daughter of Julian Biles and it is said there is a wedding in the offing there, too. Joe-Payne wasn't winning and so he asked his parochial brother the name of the patron saint of Bingo and suggested that his brother might bring them all a little luck if he would get busy and bless the bingo cards, etc., etc.

I did not see my coffee hostess this morning as she had gone to town to have her perruque worked over. J. H. spent the day in Monroe and so I did not see him at supper. The clerk and I dined alone on chicken-okra gumbo, stuffed peppers and steak, any single dish having been more than ample for a whole meal and I was glad I had been eating a little less of late to make room for a bit of expansion.

And now I must make a round of the ice box where a slab of lemon and a glass of milk awaits my attention, after which I shall go fishing in the ether waves in hope of hooking a Kennedy.....

15670

15670

Thursday, August 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Clear and humid and hot until 5 o'clock tonight when a brisk breeze rolled up masses of cloud, thunder rumbled at a great rate and a sprinkle ensued.

I was interested to learn this noon that Longwood, the old 8 sided house in Natchez, has been sold. Celeste spent the day in Alexandria and so J. H. dined with us at the big house. He handed me a clipping sent by the General for me in clippings for J. H. When handing it to me, J. H. said it was a news item about Landsdown having been sold. He said he remembered the place alright, across the road and put the trace a piece from ruined Homewood. I mentioned that David Hunt had been the builder of both places. He replied that David Hunt was indeed mentioned in the news item. I placed the clipping beside my place at table and just as we had finished soup, the ceiling fan whisked the paper to one side and as I picked it up, I thought the picture I saw was not Landsdown of David Hunt but Longwood of Dr. Haller Hutt and so it turned out to be.

I don't know the date of the paper for the dateline had been out off. Perhaps when I have an opportunity to read the piece carefully, there may be something or other to indicate the date, --some reference to Pilgrimage or some such. I shall use this announcement, however, as a basis to do a column about the re-discovery of two mansions, -- Longwood and Vaux-le-Vicomte, the Natchez property as a come-on for southern readers, the Vaux-le-Vicomte for people with a wider range of interest.

I talked on the 'phone twice with I. S. Willard today. She is stirring up some kind of a painting of Madame Aubin Roque's garden. Mrs. Kilpatrick or somebody had given her a list of the plants figuring in that setting when it was still on Cane River in this area and I. S. W. is going to try her hand at putting some of the plants in the picture although years ago she did a pastel of that very garden, --a picture I saw was returned to her a few years back. The reason I



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mention the Willard collis based on the fact that the reason for them was a request that I describe the appearance of sweet olive bushes or trees to I. S. W. There must be dozens of them thriving in small private gardens all along Williams Avenue in her immediate neighborhood and it is difficult to imagine she had to call me to describe them, not to say that it is even stranger that I. S. W., quite conscious of flowers and plants, should have lived this long and successfully avoided ever encountering any. She wanted to know the usual height of the bush or tree, the shape of its leaves, the appearance of etc., etc. Something tells me when she eventually encounters one she will catch her breath, exclaiming that either she had completely forgotten such a familiar garden piece which she is bound to have known and may, for all I know, have one or more in her own garden. As you know, my own powers of description might be enhanced considerably and yet try as I might, I could not convey in words what the bush she wanted to paint might look like.....interruption.....

I can't remember what I was talking about or if I had finished. The telephone call was from Natalie who had some form from the Library of Congress that needed filling out. We did that and talked of other things. She and her husband and son, the one of religious persuasion, are going to Houston tomorrow just to look the place over, attend a ball game, spend the night at the Shamrock, returning home Saturday. It sounds like a pleasant outing and since all three are baseball enthusiasts, they really ought to have a fine time.

She said she had had a card from her daughter who reported the jaunt to Niagara Falls had been wonderful and they were heading toward Chicago for the Convention forthwith.

Both Natalie and I agreed that the time to have children is when people are young and foolish.

She reported vast enchantment with her new daughter-in-law who, like Natalie, I take it, can do all sorts of things without any trouble, cooking, cleaning and so on. The daughter-in-law has applied for a secretarial job at the college while her newly acquired husband is serving his three years in the Marines.

And now I must get busy and see about knocking off a column. The air remains pleasantly cool and is deliciously heavy with the perfume of butterfly lilies.....

07021

15672

Friday, August 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, humid and thus far no rain, remarkable to relate.

At coffee this morning Celeste had much to say about her visit yesterday to the Baptist Hospital to call on Blythe. She found her looking wonderfully rested which, come to think of it, is no great surprise since it is probably the first time in her 73 years that Blythe has had anything approaching suspended animation. I suppose she did take time out to have four children somewhere along the way but I imagine that never slowed her down for more than a day or two. She said Blythe mentioned the possibility of going to Shreveport for a little while on leaving the hospital to stay a bit with her daughter, Frances Jack. Since, however, she doesn't plan leaving the hospital until she can navigate readily, my guess is that she will be anxious to get back into the swing of things at her own home before very long.

This afternoon I had a pleasant hour with some people from south Louisiana. It's odd their last name escapes me. It was a mother and son. They purchased the old Pugh home from Mrs. Baker a number of years ago and have restored it nicely, I have heard. The lady owns the Saturday Gallery in New Orleans and features Hunter pictures there, I have been given to understand, but nothing was said about that during the visit. The son struck me as being around 20. He has been studying contemporary literature and leques in September for England where he will continue his studies. He is going on a Rhodes scholarship, being the first Louisianian in a long time, perhaps ever, to receive a Cecil Rhodes award, a fact which pleased his mama understandably enough.



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Hunter Pierson 'phased from Alexandria, explaining the Philip Langers are having to shoot "The Slave" scenes on Saturday and asking if they could come Sunday instead. The magical hour was set for 2:30 which may turn out to be 12:30 or 4:30, knowing Pierson propensity for ignoring time. It is possible, of course, that the Langers, being in the business they are, might possibly know Sidney Poitier or some of the moguls in the West Coast industry with which he is connected and since Kristin Nelson hasn't come through as yet with information in that line, this might be as good an opportunity as any to see what the Theatre Guild might have to impart regarding that subject.

Doreatha mentioned today that she had been down to pay a little visit on Miss Eedie on the Cohen plantation, Miss Eedie being the last mother-in-law of the late Clyde Claude Emmett Davis. Miss Eedie passes for having good sense but wonderful to relate, she has a perfect way of leading one astray on that point. She broke her arm last week, was taken to the hospital where the doctor put her arm in a cast and sent her back home. She found the cast irksome and accordingly, --and I don't know how, succeeded in getting it off and off it has been ever since. How such procedure is to help her bones to knit, I wouldn't know. It all reminds me of something the Solomon twins attempted when they were teen agers. Big Sir broke his arm, went to town and had it set and all ran along merrily for a few days until Zelma one morning noticed Little King disappearing around the back of the corncrib carrying a saw. She waited a few minutes and then went out to investigate, discovering Little King was trying to assist his brother in sawing off the cast. He hadn't gone far or should I say they hadn't gone far when Zelma arrived, putting her foot down firmly and the cast remained intact and on Big Sir until it was time for the doctor to remove it. I can readily imagine how surprised the doctor is going to be when next Miss Eedie presents herself to have her broken arm looked after.

News from Chicago suggests the Democratic convention is made up of faction, all proceeding on the "rule or ruin" highway to disaster for the Party. But then, the Democrats always make lots of noise but usually smooth things out in the end which I hope maybe the case on this go-round.

May it be ever so nice in Lyme this weekend.....

12674

15674

Sunday, August 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Heat and humidity in the 90's but no rain right here for two whole days although there were showers up the road.

According to plans, Hunter Pierson brought Mr. and Mrs. Philip Langer this afternoon but not according to plans, at least not according to mine, he brought a flock of other people along, too, twelve or fourteen, I believe. The fewer the number of pilgrims, the more satisfactory the tour and this one turned out not much the way I had anticipated but everyone seemed to have a fine time and it was't difficult for me to conceal my disappointment.

There is always something unexpected in Hunter Pierson visitations, never the same but always just a little annoying. For instance, Hunter called me twice during the past week so he must have my number. On Sunday afternoons right after noon day dinner, J. H. takes a nap. My 'phone rang about 14 minutes before the Hunter Pierson appointment. It was J. H. calling to say Hunter had just called, asking him to tell me he would be 15 minutes late. That nettled me. Of course, he wasn't 15 minutes late but 60 minutes behind schedule. As he explained on his arrival, he had tried to sandwich in Beaufort between Hatchitoches and Melrose and had not allowed himself enough time and, in so doing, left me ample time to sweat it out at the front gate with the mesquite hordes waiting the arrival of 3 people who turned out to be 14. But aside from that unfortunate beginning, the rest of the business ran along smoothly. I was able to engage Philip Langer in conversation for a few minutes. I spoke of the forthcoming book about a character which I thought someone like Sidney Poitier might handle nicely. He said that Mr. Poitier is very particular about roles he undertakes to interpret but that the Theatre Guild would certainly be interested in seeing the script and only then, of course, could he tell if the Guild of which he is the head, as I understand it, would consider producing it. He said if I would write him personally about the matter when the book comes off the press, he would himself give it his personal attention. His office is at the Theatre Guild, -- 226 West 47th Street, or some such number which can be secured easily enough at some future date when the book is out and James decides how he wants to proceed.

I had rather expected to see James during the past week but I suppose he is busy with shoring up the ground washed away by the



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recent rains. Thelma mentioned one day last week that she was dining at 209 South Williams with Kay on Saturday afternoon and I thought James might call me at that time but possibly he was still busy.

There was a call from Florida this morning. Mrs. Walker reported things were going along nicely and that both she and her mother were delighted with their situation and she, Ursula, was looking forward to attending a teachers' gathering on the morrow, immediately after which school begins. I was sorry to learn that Esther is seriously ill in the Yale-New Haven Medical Center. Mrs. Walker had not heard from that quarter in some time and had called Westbrook where a servant had given the news and the New Haven hospital number where Helen was reached. Apparently the trouble stems from the bang received on the highway a while back and excessive pains in the head seem to be one thing causing concern. I shall drop Helen a line tonight.

I was not satisfied with the column I did about Longwood and Vaux-le-Vicomte. The subject or two subjects were too vast for inclusion within the limitations of a single column. But I have let the thing go through for publication but I think I shall return to them separately a little later on the theory some reader may be interested although the Vaux matter is a little remote for the majority of Louisiana followers of the column.

Carmen called me today. She had just had a letter from her brother of Baton Rouge. His law firm has a member of the staff who lived in Prague as a child. After 19 years of absence from his family, he made a visit home last month, returning to the United States last Monday, reaching Baton Rouge on Tuesday when the Russian invasion began. He tried to reach his mother by phone but all wire service was out and direct communication impossible. While upset by the uncertainties of the moment, he is naturally grateful for the vacation he had at home that, so far as his own plans are concerned, ended just in the nick of time.

The name of Daisy Dell Garber came to the fore on Saturday when a certain Mr. Garber of Morgan City appeared at my door. He said he was a brother of Daisy Dell of Dallas, -- what a name, but finally I recalled the gal, a fancier of Clementine masterpieces of whom I had not thought in years. And so a new week gets under way and I hold the thought it was a happy one in Lyme....

15676

15676

Monday, August 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, cooler and less humid. Like the January thaw, so August often introduces in its post middle period a little hint of autumnal weather and that is how the weather seems today. There will be plenty of hot weather in September, of course, but this August promise of a cooler season in the offing makes the balance of the summer so much more palatable.

But even nicer than today's weather was today's post bringing with it the August 23rd letter from Lyme. The excellent picture it presented of the Bedlam going on in little Miss Lee's neighborhood made it quite understandable how pleasant it must be to get away from all the racket for a little while during the day. Recalling so clearly how the main thorough proceeds in that particular area, I find it difficult to imagine the confusion that must result from all the operations being carried out there at the moment. Let us hold the thought that the "powers that be" may hurry up with the job so that a measure of peace may return forthwith.

The reference to the letter from Natalie was being read just at the time a phone call came in from her relative to a column. She reported a fine outing in Houston and said their hosts, -- the President of some big corporation in that city, were just perfect, so far as the Astrodome was concerned. As everyone present fell into the class of baseball enthusiasts and as their boxes were in an ideal position to view the game, they were very pleased. The other guests were all charming people and the amenities dispensed including food and drink in the private adjoining room to the box contributed further to the general delight of all present. I asked about the Shamrock Hotel where they spent Friday night and was told it left much to be desired, the rooms not ready for guests, insufficient service and poorly trained waitresses and so on. I believe the Shamrock has been under Hilton management for some time unless Hilton has disposed of his interest recently. It is said an enormous motel complex is coming into being somewhere in the environs of Houston and it is assumed that this development will further depress the Shamrock foundations which already seem to be sagging in anticipation of the up-coming caravanserie, being pushed on such a gigantic front.



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What with the Democrats opening up their convention tonight, I naturally tuned in on Chicago. Even as in the case of the Republican convention, so this Democratic gathering got comparatively scant attention from both CBS and ABC in contrast to a couple of NBC stations which devoted all their time to the doings. I suppose CBS and ABC gave summaries on the hour but they did not allow much time in between and therefore, naturally, I kept glued to NBC.

The shows the Republicans on the one hand and the Democrats on the other put on at their conventions might be compared to the differences between the carriage trade and the covered wagon traffic, the Republican business all thoroughly oiled and well tufted as opposed to the Democratic procedure, all rough and tumble and general uproar. In some place or other I have mentioned that History echoes to the sound of wooden shoes, the Democrats, mounting the wooden steps while the silken slippers -- the Republicans, -- are descending the polished staircase and thusfar, that seems to be about the difference between Miami Beach and Chicago high-jinks.

I thought both the Republican and Democratic key-note addresses were excellent. What the Senator from Hawaii had to say in his speech was excellent and wonderfully delivered although it seemed to me that from a political point of view, it might have been more advisable had some of the topics, those revolving around current disorders, might well have been played down a little more than they were or omitted altogether since some of the points seemed to provide the opposition with ammunition.

It will seem to me as of the moment that the McCarthy forces are pushing their theories too vigorously since, knowing that they cannot win the contest for the nomination, they are tending to weaken the whole Democratic structure by keeping the racket going so violently. Because I think Nixon is a flat tire, I don't want him to become head of the Government for, of the two men, Humphrey strikes me as being the much more gifted man, intellectually and politically. I hope the McCarthy crowd is not being motivated by an impulse of "rule or ruin" and because they are keeping their own racket going at such a great rate, I fear they will end up by handing the Presidency over to Mr. Nixon on a silver platter.

One thing that has impressed me on this first day of the convention is the fact that on the radio I haven't heard the name of Roosevelt, -- any Roosevelt, -- mentioned. This seems odd but, of course, the convention is still young.....

15678

15678

Tuesday, August 27th, 1968.

Memorandum:

The prettiest day of the summer, all sunny, thermometer in the upper 80's with a steady cool breeze to make it seem cooler than it actually was.

James 'phoned this noon. The other day I. S. Willard mentioned having spoken with Kay and I asked after her good health and that of James. I suppose I. S. W. mentioned my inquiry to Kay and Kay probably passed along the word that I had asked about the 406 Williams people.

James said he had been busy during the past couple of weeks reading proof on the Prince story. He said Kay was going to Saline this afternoon to call on Carrie at the home of Carrie's friend, May, -- and nobody can ever remember having heard May's last name but James felt sure anybody around Saline would be able to direct one to May's.

This morning Natalie 'phoned to say she thought she had seen her grandson on TV at the Chicago convention last night. She said he was standing on a chair, his back to the camera but his figure and the coat being worn looked like Brit or whatever the boy is called. She had talked with some member of the family Monday night and learned that thus far things were rocking along alright in Chicago so far as they, the family, -- and a bus load of them, were concerned.

She mentioned that the Leslie Club, the literary society in Hatchitoches, has brought out its schedule of one monthly meeting every four weeks for the impending season and she has been asked to appear to present the March gathering. The Club usually devotes its entire season to some particular subject and this year it will be Women In Art. She said she thought she would do some painter, perhaps Rosa Bonheur or Clementine Hunter or some such. I suggested that if she planned to do Miss Bonheur, she might do well to go back a little further and try her hand at Elizabeth Vigee-Lebrun. The name didn't seem to register but the mention of a few portraits by that lady's brush seemed to bring things into focus. I take it Natalie may have missed a column I did on that subject a few years back. She seemed to quicken to the topic and I told her I would drop her a note tonight suggest



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a few points of approach and a couple of books that might be helpful, including volume 2 of a two volume set of Memoires which I. S. Willard has, etc., etc. I said I supposed two of the artist's best known canvases were the "Arie Antoinette" holding a rose and the self-portrait of the artist being embraced by her daughter. She seemed to recall the first but not the second. I suppose few people know the one of Benjamin Franklin in the Metropolitan but that ought to be a good one to mention to an American audience, I should think.

Irvy Nott was here for supper, the first time I had seen him in months. As he and J. H. and the clerk came into the summer dining room:

"Are you going to San Juan....."

The response was a simple "Yes".

I wonder what that is about, --perhaps an R. E. A. thing or some such.

I. S. Willard called this afternoon. Among other things she reported was the fact that Ada Jack Carver had had a slight palpitation and was in the hospital for tests. She said Ada Jack had reported that Vice President Humphry had asked David Snell to come to see him when David was in Chicago during the convention. From that I. S. W. concluded that David is handling the convention for Life.

Like everybody else tonight, I listened to the Chicago doings and found myself amazed at all the tomfoolery that went on among the delegates. I am particularly annoyed at those politicians who keep trying to push Edward Kennedy into a Presidential race at such a time as this and in spite of his specific requests that his name not be put up. Consideration now here seems to be such an absence of any feeling for one carrying so many burdens as he is bound to be bearing in the wake of the tragedies that have be-set his family, the failing health of his father and all the demands that are bound to be weighing down on him at the present moment.

The weather is so beautiful, I should so much like to share it with everybody and most especially with those dwelling at Lyme.....

15680

Theatre Guild

15680

Wednesday, August 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Another beautiful day, mid 60's by night, mid 80's by day.

The 9 o'clock coffee break this morning was pleasant ending abruptly as such meetings often do when mine hostess suddenly remembers someone she has to 'phone or some such. This morning as she turned to step into the house while I turned to go out the front door, she exclaimed:

"Oh, by the way, we are going to Puerto Rico on Saturday," and disappeared into the house. So that is that.

This afternoon about 4 o'clock, August brought a gentleman to see me. It was Philip Langer. Of course I was surprised and delighted at seeing him without out-riders. We collapsed on the sofa for a cold coke and a little chat. He was heading for Magnolia and took the opportunity to drop in to see me for a few moments and talk a little more about the book I had mentioned on Sunday. He said he hoped I would send him a copy of the book as soon as it became available and I promised to do so. I guess I shall proceed along that line without mentioning it to anyone for I suppose it isn't often the Theatre Guild asks for a script and, in the event it might capture his imagination, it will be time enough then to direct him to the Squire.

Mr. Langer told me that he had just about decided not to use Beaufort in the movie. He said the difficulty in getting proper outside shots of the place because of the foliage had inclined him to give thought to Magnolia. Waiting for him in the car at the front gate were his daughter and a camera man their intention being to take a second look at Magnolia to see about the avenue of trees to see if the house itself were sufficiently hidden so details of the structure itself wouldn't show very much. I told him the house was early 1900 not built like the original mansion and we both held the thought the avenue might distract the camera's eye from the architectural facade.



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I thought the opportunity a good one to inquire about the identity of Mr. Bibermann, or however that gentleman spells his name, the same if man John Kyser had conferred in Shreveport some weeks back. He told me with disarming candor or possibly unguarded frankness that Mr. Bibermann is the director who has had considerable success in movie making in the past. His film, "Salt of the Earth", among others has been widely acclaimed and that particular film received a top reward some time back at the Paris international film show. Mr. Bibermann was done out of a job when back in the days of that horrible Senator Joe McCarthy puts the Bibermann name on the list of the ten worst Communists in Hollywood. He took up real estate operations for a while and is now returning to the films. Either Mr. Langer honored me with trusting my discretion or took a daring chance in mentioning the above or, possible he does not imagine what an uproar this news, if released right now, would cause in this area. John would collapse if he heard of it and I am quite sure that Hertzog would never let his Magnolia be incorporated in the picture. I shall not breathe a word of it to anyone although in confidence I shall tell Natalie that her sister-in-law's house probably will not be used in the film.

While I think of it, I want to mention a column of several years back but in mentioning it, I pray no gesture will be made to locate it inasmuch as I am referring to it only out of curiosity as to its probable date just in case little Miss Lee in the months ahead while in that department, should upon it. I do not recall the title but the subject matter was about the Natchez Prince and Foster's Mound. The story was the same as Wildcat on the Mound but the presentation and people appearing in the column were rather more elaborate than the Wildcat one. I shall not need this information this year but should it ever be encountered, I shall be glad if the title and date may be noted.

As for the the selection of the Presidential candidate at the Chicago meeting, I think I never heard a more beautiful eulogy of Adlai Stephens. As for the balance of the evening, I don't ever remember having heard such an exercise in cupidity, stupidity and bad manners. I found myself frequently thinking of a Renaissance transfer of power in Florence, wonder which, --high or low would be next in getting clopped on the head.....

15682

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Thursday  
Friday, August 29th, 1968.

Fl  
3 AM.

Memorandum: I never heard of Igua Summer in Louisiana in August but this seems to be it, fair in the mid 60's to 80's with the humidity sufficiently low to make the ozone seem plentiful enough.

The day has been a busy one with people and more people taking up one's time to non-particular advantage to anybody, least of all the visitors.

Feeling I got the idea about 4 o'clock that if I knocked off half a column before supper, I could knock off the balance of the thing right afterward and so be "all set" for the final session of the Chicago convention, which I really wanted to hear and did, indeed, succeed in doing. But I did not finish the column until considerably after midnight. The difficulty arose when I returned from supper and began typing away when a vast pounding came at the door. It was one of the ever-servers who said there were some friends of mine from France on the gallery, asking if they might see me. I put on a shirt and stepped out of doors to find a couple of men from France, that fact and only that fact seeming to be their only claim to my friendship. Frankly I was provoked that they had had the nerve to stop at such an hour and that the store had sent anybody with them to me to bother me.

They explained they had been in New Orleans since early Spring research on something or other and had decided to drive up this way view the countryside. I gave them a little tour but pushed them into their car as soon as possible in order to return to my column, unable to recall just where I had left off and thus forced to start all over again. But by then it was time for the convention to get going and so I pushed the whole thing aside and waited until the politicians had finished and then began anew, --something about Rachel Field.

As for the convention, I am more puzzled than ever about the whole business and especially about the performances of the delegations from California, New York and Wisconsin. They particularly seemed determined to wreck the whole thing and I find myself wondering if most of them in reality are not Democrats at all.

I am equally in a fog about the doings of Senator McCarthy and



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his refusal to attend the final session for the acceptance speeches  
newly chosen Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates.  
I was further mystified when I learned that instead of attending  
that meeting, Senator McCarthy had gone to Grant Park to harangue  
2 or 3 thousand protesters and hippies. I can make nothing at  
all out of such doings, not to mention the hundred and one  
outrageous carryings-on in the convention itself.

I thought both acceptance speeches were just grand. With  
the party itself having been so torn asunder, it's going to  
be an almost impossible job for Mr. Humphry to patch it  
together and hope to win the campaign. About the only ray of  
hope I see is the chance that the public generally will  
be shocked by the unfairness to the candidate that, as in the  
case of the Truman surprise winning of his election, people  
may vote for Humphry as an expression of their resentment against  
all the mischief-makers.

In the United States over the years one has become so accustomed  
to each political party acting as a unit in spite  
of personal preferences for platforms and candidates that  
one seems to have forgotten that the single political unit  
could splinter into such a strange mixture of willful  
attempts at party suicide that it is something of a felt when  
one considers the Chicago fiasco, making one realize more  
clearly the desirability of two solid political parties  
and how impossible it would be to operate a democratic  
system if the individual parties themselves went  
all to pieces.

As for the performances of McCarthy, Dick Gregory and all the  
actors in the ranks of confusion, I am at the  
moment quite baffled in my efforts to understand anything  
that has been going on this week. I gather  
that one result of all this protest parades and whatnot,  
it is likely to be a long time before any major party  
again selects the Windy City as a con-

vention site.  
The hour approaches 3 o'clock and I am holding the thought  
tomorrow may see less people and have five minutes to  
attend to a few things not taken care of today. Natalie  
mentioned last week that the typewriter ribbon I was using was so we  
she had difficulty reading the column and I am  
happy I was able to get a new one "laced up" today.  
I do hope you haven't had too much strain on the eyes in trying  
to wade through script of the past week or two.....

I hope to start some day to write a book about the  
history of the United States.

15684

Friday, August 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

I am enclosing a letter from Blythe which I highly perfumed.  
I find myself wondering if the scent will fuse with that of  
the butterfly lily and whether the combination will create  
something more pleasant or less so.

I laughed to myself when Blythe said she hadn't made up  
her mind about which candidate she might vote for. I  
could have told her that she wouldn't vote for Humphry since  
none of the Bands have ever voted for a Democrat.

I was puzzled by what a secretary could not make out early  
in Blythe's letter, -- the second or third sentence. The reader  
thought the words were "mockingbird splatter bath" but he wasn't sure I  
guess that is what she had intended writing, -- just another  
way of saying she didn't like taking sponge baths. I  
shall respond by saying that mockingbird baths are rare for me but  
all summer I indulged in plenty of bluejay doublings, thanks  
to the frequency of the showers.

Mid morning, on returning from the Post Office,  
I caught a breath of perfume, the fragrance of which was un-  
mistakeable. It had come into being between the time  
I left the front gallery enroute to the Post Office and my  
return a few minutes later. The first blossom of the  
season in the elephant ear department had unfolded and the air was  
heavy with the aroma. I hunted around and found some small leaves  
of the plant, -- comparatively small, that is, say about 5 or 6 inches in  
greatest length of their heart-shaped leaves and then snipped  
off the blossom itself to make a bouquet. The long saffron spindle  
is about a foot and a half in length and formed a very pleasant  
streak of color on my desk. I couldn't leave it  
there long, however, since the musky-head perfume was too  
oppressive, impelling me to place my fine bouquet in  
the living room when I got ready to seat myself at my  
desk.

I must give Beth Beaufort Cloutier a buzz in the  
morning so she may run down the she what she declares she has never  
known to exist before. In casting about for the flower itself, I chanced



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upon a couple of small "spindles", just starting to emerge from along the sides of the stems supporting the big leaves some 3 or 4 feet further up in the air and I shall leave them as they are so Beth and two or three other people in town may see them ing, --people like Kay, for instance, who have never seen this remarkable type of blossom.

I did not recognize the figures there from my vantage point at the door where I was standing putting a bandaid on my finger. I thought it might be two school children, a boy and a girl, school having opened today. Stepping out on the gallery, I still did not identify them but I did soon enough afterward, -- Celeste in short pants and Hazel-Courage in skirts. Hazel used to live in Hatchitchee but now dwells in Monroe. It seems she had come down to spend the day. We all laughed at my failure to recognize either of them.

Saturday noon Celeste, J. H. Jarred Pratt and Henry Lemoyne drive from here to Baton Rouge where J. H. will drop off some fresh vegetables from the Ghana garden for the S. G. Henrys. Perhaps Lull Hankins will be traveling with them and from Baton Rouge they will go on to New Orleans, I suppose, for they are flying to Porto Rico Saturday evening, planning to return home along about Thursday or Friday. Jarred and Henry have on occasion the Mexican jaunts with J. H. in times past.

I continue catching what news I can of the Chicago aftermath of the convention. I am more puzzled than ever about the McCarthy doings. I am equally baffled that members of the McCarthy organization should have been dropping bottles out of the windows from the 15th floor of the Chicago hotel where the McCarthy suite was situated. I should not have supposed there could be so many Joe Henrys in the world until I listened to the Chicago uproar during the past week.

I held the thought some of the self same Indian Summer obtaining may be spreading across the Lyme horizons this week end and that all may be rocking along as little Miss Lee would have it.....

15686

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Sunday, September 1st, 1968.

Memorandum: I am thinking about the little gathering at home, the good things being planned for the dinner and the people being expected to grace the board. I am glad the prospective menu was touched upon. It all sounded so appealing, especially as I contemplated just how the viands would turn out under the expert hand of Madame Vatel.

I appreciate the kindness in letting me know about the health of my favorite neighbor. I am so sorry to learn things in the health department are going as they are. As I read the section about the visual problem, I recalled Dr. Miller's observation on that subject:

"The miracle of it all is that miracles really do sometimes happen."

Let us all hold the thought.

Of course, in regard to the columns, I understand perfectly just how the situation is. The wonderful thing about that is that a complete file is to hand so that it may be consulted on and over another occasion in the future, should occasion require a check-up.

I am so glad there was an opportunity to witness some of the doings at Chicago. During the past couple of days I have heard one or two people speculating on that subject generally, one little piece of evidence or rumor that seems to offer a possible explanation that otherwise seems so baffling about the whole performance.

One of the overseers, Mr. Scarborough, chanced to be in San Francisco on that weekend just before the convention started.



15687

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He reported how puzzled he was at the air port to see so many hippies and other dubious characters rushing to the terminal, all provided with tickets. He asked several of these members of the gangs, all of them obviously without luggage, where they got the tickets for Chicago and all said the same thing, -- "Our parents" which didn't sound convincing since all used the same two words, "Our parents".

I mentioned this this afternoon to Natalie when she called to do a column. She had not seen her daughter since the latter's return but she said she had heard, -- I think on TV, that there was much speculation going on about the unbelievable actions both inside and outside the convention hall and that the impression was given by the speakers that Republicans had supplied much money to be used in what ever way the Democratic meeting could best be wrecked. In one case, the speaker said that much evidence at the time had been collected and that quite possibly names would eventually be named. She mentioned also that several people had said that NBC had given a much more lurid presentation of facts than any other network and the slant on these news items, although factual, had been so slanted as to produce quite a biased impression to viewer on TV. I may have mentioned last week that it seemed to be NBC that was doing the continuous running account of things and now I am wondering if a NBC was employed, ostensibly by Democrats but actually by Republicans to make their programs appear so constantly and so slantedly as they were. I cannot believe that such a great network could be or would tolerate such a transaction but it is curious, nevertheless, that the NBC presentation was so constant while the other networks were often showing baseball games or some such. I have long wondered how the hippies can travel about the country at such a great rate with no visible support but possible one explanation for some of them may be found in this particular instance to be within underground persons like me, so baffled by the whole business. It seemed to me the three delegations, -- California, New York and Wisconsin seemed determined to tear the whole proceedings to pieces and at the time I found myself wondering if some of the key members of these delegations, even as some Louisiana politicians we knew, went to the convention with a firm determination in advance to give the whole thing a black eye. As for the McCarthy performance, that is altogether beyond my comprehension.

The folks get off for Puerto Rico Saturday noon. I had pilgrims most of the afternoon and quite a few today. The postal boys will be celebrating Labor Day on the morrow. I held the thought there is too much labor going on in Lyme.....

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Monday, September 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum: Natalie and I went to the beach today. I like about Labor Day is the promise that there will be less pilgrims for the intervening six weeks between now and Pilgrimage. As a matter of fact, there weren't very many today although a half a dozen, loaded with cameras, jumped up out of nowhere this afternoon, -- some of these ones from the coast of "The Slave" who had been here before. Three of them were from Staten Island, of all places, and they went to some trouble to explain to me how people on that island were unhappy about the traffic the new bridge across the Harrows funnels that particular body of land more or less surrounded by water. I think there was one girl in the group and there may have been more but it was difficult to say, what with everybody's hair worn long and everybody appearing in pants. So far as the film is concerned, it is said to be pretty well rounded up and that within two weeks they hoped to be heading toward State Island. They mentioned the release date of the picture as April, to coincide with something or other but I have forgotten just what, -- maybe April 1st. Feel's Day, which I had heard of for the first time I can remember, the plantation didn't work today. Word must have made three rounds that this is a holiday so that everyone did a d. b. more of frolicking on Sunday night since the morrow might be a time for sneezing. I heard of only one bit of scuffling on Sunday night and that didn't amount to much. There was a gathering of youths and maidens at Wood's place a couple of miles up the river on the west bank. Roy, son of Putschie, .....



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Monday, September 2nd, 1968

got into some kind of a brush with one or another of the boys from Hatchiteches or some such place and when they saw the outlanders were giving every indication they were going to pounce on him, he ran across the road, jumped into the river with all his clothes on and swam to the east shore, getting somewhat dampened, of course, but eluding his pursuers. I was told that he had called me this morning to say she and John were spending the day at home, doing some work on a house adjoining their property, a house they recently purchased, I believe. She said E. B. had brought them a fine big fish he had caught the other day and that there was plenty of provender if I would like to come up for dinner. I appreciated the invitation, of course, but declined venturing so far afield on a holiday. I listened with some attention tonight to the two versions of political news as offered up by ABC and CBS. Perhaps I imagined it but it did seem to me that while both versions were objective enough, the ABC observations about Mr. Humphry's reception at the Labor Day parade in New York presented a somewhat less favorable picture than CBS. This week's Hatchiteches paper goes forward in the same mail with this memo. Some place in the paper there's a conventional picture of Yucca, along with a short article designed for Pilgrimage publicity. Carmen called me one day last week to say Rita Sutton who has been in the hospital for the past year or so, had been encouraged to do some articles. The suggestion was made in hopes it would bring Rita around men ally if she got interested in anything and doing some articles was as good a move as any, especially as Rita doesn't write much. From the phrases in the article Carmen read me, it struck me that Rita had been provided with the booklet get out some years back by the Hysterical Ladies, a publication to which I had contributed an article or two. Let us hold the thought Rita's efforts serve to bring her back into balance. How strange are the cure employed in mental therapy.....

15689

15690

Tuesday, September 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum: I have begged you, then had I ask you to do it. Sprinkley all day and cool. We were lucky in this immediate locality, however, since it was only sprinkles that descended upon us while above and below, it poured. The mail was a little heavier today, as was to be expected but what with one thing and another, I didn't get around to go into any of it. I was glad to see a letter from Quebec, John Andreassen, undoubtedly replying to a letter from me about Lyle, penned a month or so back when the Canadian postal strike was keeping mails from being forwarded anywhere north of the border. James appeared this morning about 10:30 and remained for dinner. He has corrected his proof sheets and printing is expected to go forward shortly. After that the material will be shipped to Dallas for binding. I was glad to talk with him a little about the handling of the memo. I shall do about the book. Naturally we did quite a bit about speculating on old Hatcher and I recalled only after he had mentioned it that he, himself, has never seen Foster's Mound and the surrounding neighborhood where the Prince spent his many years in Mississippi. I asked him about the title he had chosen for the book, Jallen, Arabic Prince of Hatcher or possibly Arabic Slave Prince of Hatcher. Personally, I should not have used anything having to do with Arabs, especially at this time in the course of human events. But it is his book and he certainly ought to be able to claim the right to name it. He thinks it should be on the market in October. I should like to see it. The sun came out for a few minutes around 11:30 while we were sitting on the sofa in the living room looking in the direction of the front garden toward the big old sugar could. I thought he was gazing with concentration for a moment or two when he suddenly asked me if I had been burning papers in either fireplace as he was noticing white smoke being.....



15691

15691

Wednesday, September 4th, 1968.

swirled around and about at tree-top level in that area. As I had not, we stepped outside to observe but could see nothing and then went around to the back of Yuoca and then over to the African House to no result. We concluded it must have been several wisps of clouds, straying lower than all the others then pretty much dominating the sky.

Naturally we spoke of the Chicago convention and he was as impressed as I by all the many and apparently unrelated incidents that combined to make the whole thing a whammy. He was struck by the roughness of the cops and the way they knocked people around and tossed them into paddy wagons, declaring at the same time that all these he saw being thus tossed into the "black Marias" deserved the treatment they received. He felt convinced that it wasn't the "flower people" but rough-necks, masquerading as such, who were behind all the outrageous demonstrations.

I heard two things in a single news item on Lowell Thomas' broadcast that impressed me. Down this way, the name of Louisiana's Governor McKeithin is pronounced in the middle as the "ith" in with, as though spelled McK-eye-thin. As for the news item itself, it seemed odd that the Governor should be announcing he would not support Humphry since Humphry had said he had approved the appointment of Chief Justice Warren, a fact which didn't seem to have out any with the Governor a couple of weeks back when he was apparently hoping to be named Vice President on the Humphry ticket.

Among other things in today's in-coming mail was a package containing a tape from Mrs. Walker, undoubtedly containing a half hour chat from that lady. Of course I am unable to rig up the darned thing to make it disgorge its message on that miracle of mysteries, the machine she insisted on presenting to me before her departure. I learned the other day she had tried it out on Natalie who had confessed to her quite frankly that it was much too much for her to manipulate and wondered how anyone blind-folded could hope to manage it. How far off the track can people, strong-minded, make up their minds they are going to jam something through.....

15692

15692

Wednesday, September 4th, 1968.

The showery weather has returned. I believe it sprinkled during last night. It rained rather briskly just before breakfast and continued drizzling all day. Tonight it is pouring. Mention was made about some place up the road advising the weather bureau it had received 4 and three quarter inches. I guess we have had about the same but I have not ventured out to observe the gauge.

It was a pleasant surprise to find a letter from Auntie in today's post. I haven't explored its contents as yet but am expecting to do so a little later if the frolic at the school tonight is over in time for a secretary to swim his way this far. It was a damp for the field hands to work but not too damp for pilgrims of whom there were rather more than I need. Nevertheless I was glad to see some of the Carter children, offspring of Napoleon Carter who, before his death in 1955, operated the Melrose garage. One of his two daughters, Celeste, was with her brother and his wife and their daughter. They had been attending a funeral in Beaumont or some place where their sister's husband had been drowned the other day.

The Carter boy has been in the air force for 25 years and has been living in various quarters of the globe. I inquired about his solution to the southeast Asia problem and he said from what he had observed there, it would seem as though getting out were the only thing to do. The sprinkling had slackened just before they put in an appearance and I used the excuse of threatening rain to push the tour toward the front gate. I was glad I did because that gave me an opportunity to pluck a bushel of akra before the rains began descending again with gusto. Although I should have attacked another type of column, I took out time to knock off one about the slave-prince of Natchez and shall post it to James tomorrow so he may make any recommendations he may care to and so



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give me time to send it along to Natalie it may go forward in ample time to the newspapers prior to the October release date the book itself. I am also suggesting that we alter the regular review for the other papers to make it a little different for The Hatcher Democrat, so that with a phrase of two, the Adams County readers may be reminded that the author is a native of their community.

Life magazine arrived today instead of Tuesday as is the usual time for it to put in an appearance. Obviously its printing was held up long enough to secure photographs of the Democratic doings in Chicago and to print the Presidential and Vice Presidential likenesses on the cover. I assume this could scarcely have been made up before Friday night unless Life knew in advance just which gentlemen were to receive the nominations. I shall run through the table of contents on the morrow to see if there is anything in this issue by David Snell. Tonight's radio news gave me to understand that Mrs. Nixon's reception today in Chicago was quite the opposite of that offered the Democrats. I suppose we aren't likely ever to get a comprehensive understanding of all that went into the caudren when the Democratic convention started bubbling over.

I. S. Willard phoned today. She reported having changed her plans for her impending European jaunt. Originally she had thought of going on a slow ship by way of a rest before reaching the other side. Now it occurs to her that she might do well to fly across the Atlantic with "all deliberate speed" and then somehow take a slow cruise after reaching the other side, possibly touching shore somewhere in the Holy Land neighborhood and thence on to Greece and so on. The primary excuse for the trip is to see her new granddaughter in Germany, after which she has to do some research in Paris and two or three other towns, mostly in southern France. Whether she will tuck in the Mediterranean cruise before or after or in between, she doesn't seem to have made up her mind. Whether she is taking into account European weather in late autumn, I did not ask. After all the time she has experienced in this area during the summer, she probably has already provided herself with an umbrella and if she will just wait a little longer, she will be able to start out with winter clothes from home and these will come in handy even in Greece, I suppose.

How pretty the sun is going to appear when it is supposed to be with us again on Friday or Saturday.....

15694

Thursday, September 5th, 1968.

Memorandum

Cool between mid 60 and 70 during the past 24 hours, with sprinkles and rains dropping another couple of inches of moisture. The cold front is supposed to be passing through this area now, heading toward the Gulf, with a promise of clearing skies from a northwesterly direction on the morrow, I hope.

There's a brief article in this week's Time about a portrait of Theodosia Burr that is just enough to set one considering the whole Burr business and recalling Jumel mansion where Theodosia's papa spent his last years in the role of Madame Ju second husband. I suppose that neighborhood of Jumel Mansion has changed greatly with the years, -- Saint Nicholas Avenue and which other street eludes me, perhaps 145 Street or some such. I held the thought the old property is still being maintained as a museum and has not been swept away by the tall apartments that seemed to be gaining a foothold the last time I passed that way.

As you may have noticed from yesterday's enclosure, I did get around to read Auntie's letter. I think she is perfectly remarkable in her ability to handle a foreign tongue so beautifully and especially as she has no one with whom she has an opportunity to exercise her linguistic abilities. I shall try to get a letter off to her by this weekend so she may have it on Monday since a peer response, promptly made, may serve better in this instance than a better one long delayed.

This morning around 9 o'clock, I gave Ann Williams Brittain a buzz, thinking to inquire about her adventures at the Chicago convention. Jack answered the phone and volunteered the information that Ann was out and would be back about 10. Of course I was glad to get him and although I did not intend keeping him from getting on to his office, I was glad to inquire about his impressions of what went on up yonder. I shall call him again some evening for a long chat. He did say, however, that while he had absolutely no means of knowing the identity of the forces behind the demonstrations, he felt very definitely that there had been a highly organized force in view of.



15695

arrangements that had been made, the supplies of walky-talkies and  
so on. When I get around to it, I shall have a chat with  
Ann and see what the angle the delegate's wife has to offer.

On CBS news this noon, some commentator was editorializing on  
the campaign just ahead. He came to the conclusion that  
Nixon was undoubtedly ahead and might remain so but he went  
on to remark that Wallace is the joker in this pack of cards and  
that because of that fact, it was just possible that  
Humphrey might just squeeze through.

For dinner today, Dereatha turned out a mighty fine ekra  
gumbo in which chicken and shrimp figured to advantage and  
which, of course, I ate twice as much as I should have. It  
is said the General is to make a round next week and I am hoping  
Dereatha may do as well with her gumbo during his visit.  
I was glad to have a note from John Andreassen to whom I  
had written about doing a little sketch about his association  
with Lyle in Federal Writers Project days. He re-  
ported just on the verge of taking off for Madrid and London but  
said he would be back by the end of the month and would be  
glad to send along the piece requested. I  
am sending the note to Natalie for her Saxon file so  
I may find the address readily to hand four weeks hence to  
drop him a note then. As for the address, there seems to be  
a little uncertainty in my mind about which to use  
in writing him and so I shall employ both, putting a carbon copy  
in one envelope, addressing the original to his  
home address, enclosing card, and sending the  
other envelope to McGill University, Montreal. It  
would seem odd for an architect to commute from  
Quebec to Montreal but perhaps the modern transportation  
makes such things possible.

I hold the thought it is quieter in Lyme by this late  
date and that Indian Summer weather may be obtaining without  
the dew and damps that are enshrouding this bend  
of the river.....

15696

Friday, September 5th, 1968.

Memorandum: I am holding the thought they had a  
restful outing. As for myself, I think I shall fold up my beard  
earlier tonight than last night which was about  
8:30 this morning. I don't know why Dereatha and Ezra waited until  
dark to come to see me with a problem. It seems  
that Dereatha has been wanting a camera and  
quite by chance a camera salesman stopped at their cabin  
recently and showed them what appeared to be  
a nice one which they might order like the sample  
shown them. He gave the price as \$49.95 which they might  
pay for at the rate of \$5.00 per month after giving him a down-  
payment of \$10.00. That was agreeable to them and so  
the salesman made out the order, asking them both to sign,  
filled in a little more, tore out their copy from his book and  
placed it on the table and was off.

Quite by chance when putting the copy of the order away, I  
noticed that the quoted price was not \$49.95 but \$490.95.  
Just imagine trying and succeeding selling a camera priced  
at nearly five hundred dollars to cabin people. Well,  
anyway, the camera as ordered arrived by mail from California  
and they told the clerk at the Post Office they didn't  
want to receive it and it was returned to the California shipper.  
Then came a letter, like a hawk on a June bug, ordering them  
to begin making payments promptly or else.



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And so -- at long last -- they came to tell me all about it and were obviously worried. I said I would call Judge Williams to see if he had any expert opinion as to what to do if anybody else did anything. The kids on the party line kept the wire hot for a long time but finally I secured a line and found the Judge's wire was busy. Finally I got thru to the Judge's residence but only to learn from his wife that the Judge was out and that some pressing business had her momentarily tied up. She would call back later.

And as I sent Dereatha and Ezra on their way and began a column about meat pies, -- something I should not have begun in view of the inevitable interruption. After I had done three paragraphs, Natalie called. Her husband was out but she would consult him on the matter on the morrow and call me back. She took the opportunity to tell me lots of things about Chicago her daughter had reported on her return home. Eventually I got back to the column only to discover I had forgotten where I left off and couldn't remember much about what I had already written. There was just one thing to do, of course, and that was to start over again which accounts for the lateness of the hour when I finally got around to folding up my beard. It is now 9:30 but I haven't as yet received the call I had expected sometime during the day. Perhaps it will come through later on the morrow. I am hoping to be able to have some word for Dereatha and Ezra by tomorrow so their trip will be a little more at ease over the weekend.

So far as first hand impressions of Chicago were concerned, there was no doubt in anybody's mind that all the uproar in the Windy City had been well planned and prepared for in advance by some group or groups although just which agencies were responsible continues to be speculative although the daughter, from what she had heard by chance at various times and from actual participants, got the impression that a couple of the major net works had a finger in the pie. This really doesn't seem possible but I mention it as passed along from the source whence it came.

I got a letter off to auntie and in mentioning her, I must say that as I think of her and little Miss Lee, I can only marvel at the wonderful linguistic endowments of both ladies and, knowing them as you do, I feel sure you will agree with me that they both are simply remarkable.....

15698

15698

Sunday, September 8th, 1968.

Memorandum: The sunshine has been glorious both yesterday and today with the thermometer moving back and forth from around 60 to 80 and back again. It has been inordinately invigorating.

Kay called about 11 on Saturday morning, asking if she and Ruth Crabtree might come down in the afternoon about 4. I said 3 would be better and so we compromised for 3:30 which I thought to be nearly 4 and, in pursuance of my suggestion they be gone by 5 they got away promptly at 5:30.

It is just as well they do not come more frequently for they always bring such delectable things to eat and my determination to reduce flies out the window at their approach. This ge-round included some marvelous shrimp in a wonderful sauce and rice over which I could pour the stuff if I liked and last night for supper I liked.

There were 3 kinds of cheeses and as many kinds of bread, vegetables without end, dressings, lettuce and so on. There was a loaf of the orange-butt cake, too, which Mrs. Crabtree had baked in the morning and I don't know what else. All I do know is that both the lobster and I are bulging.

I thought Kay seemed very tired and perhaps for that reason somewhat forgetful but I. S. Willard called me today to say she had talked with Kay last night about 10 o'clock and that she had had a nap on her return from down the river and was feeling much rested.

Kay said the O'Brians, -- Irma and Farley, -- and perhaps one or two other people, are coming from the West Coast the latter part of October. Some Rumanian princess to visit Kay, too, at that time, and she wanted to know if she might bring her down to see me. She might. It seems to me I have heard this Rumanian number on the radio at one time or another, possibly on a Billy James Harjis show which is no recommendation for anybody.

When the ladies departed, I rounded up a bouquet of elephant ear blossoms and some butterfly lily stalks which made a very odd looking flower arrangement but they liked the flowers and far be it from me to discourage anybody from trying a hand at such combination.

On the travel front, there has been a sketchy account of the p



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week's doings in the West Indies that, of course, turned out to have planned and carried out quite differently from anything I could have imagined. I had supposed the point of the trip was to nestle down on Puerto Rico for a few days of quiet and relaxation but it wasn't that way at all. Puerto Rico was one place to be visited, of course, but here were other islands, too, such as Hispaniola, --Dominican Republic or Santo Domingo, Haiti, Jamaica from Kingston to Montego Bay and so on! gathered that Puerto Rico was considered the most expensive, Haiti the most poverty-stricken and beautiful and the other places, so-se. I take it that if one really ~~was~~ wants to get a true impression one would do well to go and look for one's self.

Having been gone from Saturday to Friday and traveling so constantly, I could hardly believe that time could have been found to find, let alone shop for gifts. But gifts were brought back, mine being what I took to be a small ash tray but I did not have to expose my ignorance about its use as the donor explained that it was made of wood to be used as a tiny tray when serving nuts. And so I find myself the proud possessor of the islands without having had to endure the rigors of having made the round trip in such a short space of time.

Natalie phoned this morning to run through a column. She seemed to be in good spirits and, having had another talk with her daughter, added a few side-lights to the Chicago convention. From what the daughter reported, one cannot help gathering that NBC was very active in presenting manipulations that would tend to discredit everything that went on at the convention. It doesn't seem possible that a institution of the status of NBC would even if it would double in such chicanery. I must say, however, that I do recall quite vividly how James reported the way TV handled the New Orleans scuffling over schools in the Crescent City and reports from the Windy City seemed to be out of the same piece of cloth. One thing the country has to be thankful for in days gone by and that is that in the days of William Randolph Hearst there were no pictorial media of the TV variety on which he could lay hands and throw a monkey wrench into the political coo.

So turns the weekend. I hope it was equally quiet in Lyme and that the racket in that neighborhood is on the way out. ....

15700

15700

Monday, September 9th, 1968.

Cloudy with a threat of rain all day, preceeding and in the wake of a cold front. But the cold front failed to put in any appearance although Shreveport got rain from 5 through 5 this morning and Alexandria declared cold and rain were imminent. About 5 this evening the skies cleared and the promise now is for fair weather on the morrow.

I am happy to report that the jelly Saturday pecker-wood breeze in this morning, bringing me no end of delight to eddies from Lyme. I can readily understand how busy these days must be and I urge little Miss Lee not to attempt correspondence under such pressure since a card will carry by itself that things are rocking along.

Thanks, too, for the card carrying the Theatre Guild add I shall be using it a little later in the month and it is so nice to have it conveniently to hand, thanks to little Miss Lee's thoughtfulness.

In today's post came a letter from Helen Gavin, -- about the first one I ever received from her, I guess since it always seems to be Esther who does the writing. Since it was posted from the Salt Meadow area, it was a promise that the girls might be back home from New Haven, I believe that is just where they are for I only read the first paragraph before pilgrims knocked out the secretarial assistance for the day. I was so glad I had opened the letter from Lyme first and thus was reassured by its contents. I shall be sending along the Gavin letter after I have had an opportunity to explore its contents.

The major part of my day was of the hop, skip and jump variety, what with lots of things to attend to. I was happy to secure the services of a carpenter of sorts this morning and made the most of the opportunity to get four new gates built, --the one in front of the house giving on the avant-cour, the one at the side of the house on the way to the African House, the one near the oysters at the northwest corner of the big house and the one near the Unicorn House leading into the gourd garden. I got a couple of big benches tightened up, too, and 8 garden benches painted and should be able to finish the balance on the morrow. I like to get the garden benches



12500

15701

Monday, September 24th, 1968.

decked out in their new coat of white paint well in advance of Pilgrimage. On one occasion, as I recall, there was a hold-up in the paint department and the job was done so late it tended to stick during the magical weekend they all likely to be used the most.

The stores escorted a couple of gentlemen introduce me while I was busy gardening this afternoon. One was from agency in town who, in turn, had brought the other gentleman out of Alexandria. The latter gentleman told me he was Texas born and raised, a fact which seemed so evident, in part due to his big Texas hat. He explained he was going to write something about pecans for some agency and thought while here, it would be a good idea to see the old house. He saw more than he had anticipated, finally exclaiming he had never dreamed there was so much to see and that he doubted now if he could remember what it was he had intended writing about pecans.

Then I finally divested myself of him and his companion, supper time and after that secretary time but I got no farther than the pecker-wood that my phone rang. It was Celeste explaining she had some friends who wanted a little tour, -- people visiting on the river, and asking when it would be convenient during the week to receive them. I observed there was no time like the present, if they were there and as they were somewhere about, she rounded them up and sent them over and that was that.

In the middle of the afternoon while I was busy extracting some poles from the bamboo hedge along the Yucca line heard a couple of hogs off in the direction of the honkey-tonk. I learned later it was Raymond Meyer shooting a 400 pound hog belonging to Beekie Martin, the hog being in Raymond's corn field. Beekie and his man, Cousin Lug, although they live quite a piece apart, have between them around 50 or 60 hogs which they never keep fastened up and naturally everybody in the cabins up and down the river are delighted at the elimination of at least one marauder in this harvest time when the hogs fatten and the garden truck shrivels.

So things turn and so I must do a bit of turning myself by knocking off a dab of mail before calling it a day.....

12503

15702

Tuesday, September 10th, 1968.  
Memorandum: Pure Indian Summer again, --clear overhead and the thermometer moving from the lower 60's to the 80's. Nobody seems to remember such a cool September.

The post brought a card from Rudolph, mailed somewhere in Peru. I haven't had a chance to read it as yet, what with more pilgrims arriving at the same time as secretaries but the arrival of the card itself is sufficient to indicate the sender must have realized his long dream of getting into the Inca country.

This morning Dereatha asked me if I would help her daughter secure a birth certificate for one of her daughter's and her daughter's child. That sounds simple enough but, like so many seemingly simple things, the undertaking turns out to be somewhat complicated.

First there is the daughter's name. She has always been called Vaughn but Dereatha says it is really Betty Vaughn Williams. That doesn't seem extraordinary until I recalled that for a while when she, Vaughn, lent me a hand in secretarial matters, the daughter's name was Yvonne. Perhaps the name, therefore, is not Betty Vaughn but Betty Yvonne Williams but Dereatha thinks there is only one between the first and second name which, apparently would make it Bett Yvonne and Bett does sound odd for a girl's first name.

One needs the year of the birth and the day if possible. Dereatha says "Bett Yvonne" is 23, there being no doubt about that, as her --Dereatha's-- children were born two years apart. I happened to remember that her son, Bill, was born December 7th, 1941 and, since "Bett Yvonne" was the next born child after Bill, her age couldn't very well be 23. There was only an old wet nurse assisting at the birth of "Bett Yvonne" and nobody can remember where she has gone and whether she ever filed any account of the birth etc., etc., etc.

And then there is the matter of Bett Yvonne's little girl who is perhaps 4 years old. She was born



15703

at the Charity Hospital in Alexandria but her name is  
so unusual that I cannot recognize any part of it and  
as Dereatha doesn't spell, she and I are having a hard  
time establishing the name itself. Dereatha thinks the  
child's last name is Williams, the same as Bett-Yvonne because the  
latter was really married to the papa of the child and what  
that name, --the pap's, --might have been is  
unknown since everybody just called him Bilbo which, as Dereatha  
spines, probably wasn't all his name.

Alexandria Charity Hospital births are recorded but  
usually are filed in New Orleans for some reason not clear to  
anybody but one can always try first one place and  
then another, an undertaking that might be facilitated if  
one first of all could round up the name of the child to get  
things initiated.

I shall unravel the thing eventually but hunting  
for a needle in a haystack seems child's play beside such an  
undertaking.

This year's folders for the tour came out today and  
I am enclosing one. I guess this year's effort is a but the  
same as usual. I haven't had an opportunity  
to glance at it as yet. I believe there is another, slightly  
more elaborate thing coming out for the Chamber of Commerce  
but I guess that isn't off the press as yet.

As is usual at this time of year, the first  
chapter about impending Pilgrimage moves lots of  
people to make a round of this bend of the river before  
Pilgrimage day dawns. In consequence of that impulse,  
I am getting more and more requests for visitations,  
most of which I turn down. Smart people, however, call  
the store instead of me and if they catch the merchant-  
planter, they always get a green light signal which dumps  
them right into the middle of my lap.

I have had two calls tonight since beginning this  
memorandum, --people who must have secured my number  
from across the river. One was from Harry Lee Lembre, wife  
of Alden Lembre, asking for a Friday conference with me, --  
the party to include new quality members from North-  
western. Nobody wants to take up my time when the impending  
tour preparations are pressing down but everyone knows that I  
would not mind making an exception in their particular  
case.

And so the day dawns and so the day what one can, rejecting  
the idea that the weather is so lovely.....

15704

Wednesday, September 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Our splendid Indian Summer, --60 to 80 degrees,  
continues and withal fair. I am glad Lyle is having a suggestion  
of the same thing.

The nicest thing about today was the arrival of Monday's  
letter, so redolent with interesting particulars.

I am holding the thought that little Miss Lee isn't  
going to too much trouble about the Hatcher Slave Prince article.  
I suppose it is possible I did not write another one and, if so,  
it isn't worth standing on one's head to find. I had completely  
forgotten about the Black Swan. That ought to present a marvelous  
vehicle for Leontine Price is the latter makes movies. So  
far as I know, there has never been a full length biography done of her.  
It seems as though that matter should be gone into a bit, too.

I am a little uncertain about the margin on this  
sheet and am moving the left hand one over a little, just in case  
I am too close to the edge. I had some difficulty  
with this machine last night although I didn't realize it until  
the post master called my attention to it when I  
handed in the out-going mail. For one thing,  
the ribbon had become unfastened from one of the spools. I  
hope it had not done that before I finished  
yesterday's memo which I followed by two or three other letters  
which may or may not have been readable.

When I finish this side of this page, I had better  
make an envelope for it so that in case the ribbon  
goes wrong again, there will at least be an envelope  
in proper order.

Needless to say, I was enchanted to have the clipping  
regarding the slave book and also the account of all the  
treasures discovered in the Antique magazine. How  
wonderful you should have run across so many subjects of es-  
pecial interest. I am impatient to re-read the whole  
letter and to make notations regarding the items of so much  
interest. I am glad you mentioned the Vigee-Lebrun memo, too.  
Perhaps it may be of service to Natalie. I shall make note of  
the date and pass it along to her if it contains anything of  
interest. You may be sure that I mentioned about the  
situation of the grave to her when she advised me she thought she  
might do a symposium on that particular painter. I shall  
never forget how enchanted I was on the occasion when little  
Miss Lee mentioned the final resting place of one of  
our favorite artists.

I wanted to say, too, how glad I am you mentioned



15705

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the names of some of the men whose portraits she had

presented the Marie Antoinette tea set to the Chateau  
of Versailles. The portrait of Benjamin Franklin  
in the Metropolitan still burns brightly in my memory  
not so much for the face as for the richness of the  
cinamen colored coat the artist painted. Verily  
her colors were always splendid.

Although I have never seen the 2 volume Memoires of  
Mme. Vigee-Lebrun I have heard I. S. Willard  
speak of the volume 2 only which she found in a London  
shop. An interesting item in that volume 2 is the  
listing of the names, together with the years, I  
believe, of the people she painted. I. S. W.  
ran through the list once hurriedly and it seems to me  
I have encountered some of those names subsequently, com-  
paritively unknown people who have figured in subsequent  
things I have read such as "Benjamin Franklin and the  
Ladies of Paris" or whatever was the title of the book  
by La Lopez. I am so happy to have the account of the participants  
in the celebration of the nuptials which you  
covered so delightfully. At long last, one has  
been able to round out a little more about the  
doings of one's neighbors and somehow it all sounds  
so romantic.

On the home front I must report that the lady doctor  
called this noon to ask if she might bring some  
people down at 3 this afternoon, some relatives of her  
office girl, -a gentleman white doctor, his wife and  
in-laws, all newly blown in from the Dominican  
Republic. Physicians, of all professional people,  
I have always found to be the poorest hands about keeping  
appointments. I asked the lady doctor to try to make it  
at 2:30 and she said she would try, actually  
arriving promptly at 4:30.

The lady doctor said the merchant-planter had  
brought her a lovely gift from Haiti last weekend.  
Laughingly she told me she had remarked to  
him that she knew why he had gone to Haiti, -dis-  
appointed in her services in being unable to cure him,  
he had simply headed off to the West Indies to see what  
the Haitian voodoo doctors could accomplish.

It has been such a lovely day, thanks to the  
grand letter to make other perfections the ultimate  
in delight.....

bonjour mon ami I hope you are well and happy

15706

15706

Thursday, September 12th, 1968.

Memorandum: able to be between  
The ideal weather continues, -- 60 -80.  
The enclosure from Blythe speaks for itself. One  
may readily imagine what a relief it must be in the  
realization that one has succeeded in casting off  
a cast. I suppose we may assume that before long now  
she will be quitting the hospital for home or for her  
daughter's home and after that she may no doubt be  
expected to be taking rides in the country. I doubt  
if she will try to make it from the gate  
to the Yucca gallery on her first trip but it will be  
easy enough for me to play her car is a "Yucca gallery"  
and journey thence for a day of chit-chat.

The day's post brought some other pieces of mail includ-  
ing a card from Del and Harry, mailed down Australia way. I  
suppose these people do get about. There was also a note from Jas  
suggesting I hold the column reviewing his book a little  
longer. I had expected to post the column to Natalie  
on the morrow but shall, of course, withhold it although  
that means I shall have to burn some midnight oil knocking  
up the review last week so he might make any additions, sub-  
tractions or alterations if he cared to do so. It would  
have been nice had he found time to give me a  
buzz, drop in or send along a note before this late hour  
but I reckon he didn't realize notification at this late hr  
of the post would make any difference.

At the close of the coffee hour this morning,  
my hostess was called the the 'phone and  
I headed out toward the side gate when I  
turned back just under the old magnolia, responding  
to a call from Celeste who said the call was for me.  
It was from some young lady in Alexandria, a Town  
Talk staff member who does a travel column, she  
said. I never see the paper and know none of the staff  
members. She had to make a trip up here  
and I suggested 2 o'clock but she said she couldn't  
make it until 3. To my surprise she appeared at the  
appointed hour. She had a camera and took a couple of  
pics of the old house.



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pictures, three, to be exact and I'm still wondering why she was so intent upon coming and why she took my pictures at all, for she didn't seem particularly interested in the old plantation. She snapped one likeness of Ghana, one of the African House and one of Lester holding Ben in his arms. She said she liked cats but I'm still puzzled as to what kind of animal story she may do with the scanty material she picked up while here.

Last night about 9 when my secretary seemed to be making an extra effort to get every word straight when reading the mail, he broke off abruptly for a moment to take a swing at something buzzing around his shoulder which I assumed might be a moth but he said it was a pure butterfly which I failed to see and which he apparently failed to hit. We resumed the letter from Lynn on which I was concentrating and was glad another secretary showed up before going to school this morning for I wanted to re-read the letter throughout which we did and where I discovered that along about the place where the bout with the butterfly had occurred last night, a paragraph had been skipped, the one having to do with the search in Colliers for the Saxon article. It is noble on the part of little Miss Lee to persist in this quest but I pray she will not push herself to the point of exhaustion in its pursuit. Should it ever come to hand, it will undoubtedly be helpful to Natalie but there certainly is no rush about it since next year may serve as well as this year for any other in the years ahead. I believe she is scheduled to do her Vigee-Lebrun next March and I am glad to be able to pass along the date of the 1964 column on the subject.

I talked with Thelma a few minutes this morning. She wanted to report her check-up with Dr. Oberdyke in Shreveport revealed the joint in her neck is making progress which made her very happy, of course. She said that the present President of Northwestern, Arnold Kilpatrick, has suddenly taken to phoning the ex-President, John Kyser, inviting him to functions and on trips, after a year of "Freideur" and John is accepting these invitations which strikes me as all to the good all around.....

15708

15708

Friday, September 13th, 1968.

Memorandum: I had a very good time at the Indian Summer continues, --58--82. This I. happened to be the coolest September since 1930. I happened to be in a Denver station last night when the weather station there gave quite an elaborate account of the 1940 cold spell in that area was discussed at considerable length and I gathered most of the west and south got cold snaps far ahead of schedules.

I spent most of my day piddling at small jobs while waiting for people to keep appointments. Mary Lee Lambre had made a very special request about bringing somebody down from town for a 2 o'clock appointment. I don't like to stand on my head at gardening until the moment guests are expected and I don't like to hammer away at a typewriter while scheduled visitors are dawdling along the highways coming in this direction since I never find it convenient to drop a page in the middle of something and then, hours, later, try to pick up the thread where it was dropped.

I called Mrs. Alton Lambre tonight at 9. She said she was alright and, "oh, yes" as a sort of afterthought, "I tried to get you this morning at 9 to say we could not make it this afternoon but since I couldn't get you, I wrote you a note which you should receive tomorrow or Monday....."

That was very thoughtful on her part since Saturday or Monday's mail will explain to me why I waited or wasted Friday afternoon waiting for what turned out to be nothing. Mrs. Alton Lambre -- Mary Lee -- claims to be a friend of my next door neighbor and she certainly knows there is a store at the bend of the river. I feel she might have played a message through either one of these phones if she couldn't reach me although, in all truth, I was right here at Lucca between 8 and 10:30 during the morning, leading me to believe Mary Lee didn't try too hard. ....



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The oval expanses of lawn in front of and behind the African House are currently being outlined by borders of color that are quite pretty. The Guernsey lilies are beginning to pop up a foot in height from the smooth grass of the lawn. You will recall they are the flowers that put up their flowers before their foliage. Between these ribbons of red and the dark green of the Giant's Beard border are pale yellow--perhaps cream, shorter lilies that make the Guernseys look even brighter. I suppose this color combination must have appeared in a photograph Miss Ramsey took a number of years ago when the Times Picayune did an article about scenes along Cane River about this time of year. The whole African House setting is going to be at its best within about a week but will have passed its prime a month hence when Pilgrimage time arrives four weeks from today.

Today's in-coming mail was somewhat odd in what it did and did not contain. There were no first class pieces at all but lots of other stuff such as two newspapers of the same date, four catalogues, all addressed to me but each one a duplicate of the others and four college catalogues, all addressed to me from the same institution. I am trying to think why college catalogues should be sent out at this particular time when, according to educational news items, all colleges are already beginning their fall semester and therefore much too late to be of any service in advertising to hook prospective students. As usually happens when the 1st class mail fails to arrive in one day's delivery, there will probably be a double dip on the next day's go-round.

The July 25th issue of Look came to hand today and while waiting for Mary Lee, I skimmed through a couple of articles, one of them having something to say about Sidney Reiter which I found interesting so far as it went but it didn't go far enough. I was surprised to find Drew Pierson had an article in the same magazine. It was something about L. B. J.'s decision not to attempt another Presidential campaign. I found the article very well written and, as to think of it, I suppose Pierson can read write if he will let off attempting merely the sensational.

And so a weekend beginneth and may it be just grand at Lyme.....

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Sunday, September 15th, 1968.

#### Memorandum:

Indian Summer on Saturday. It sprinkled all night and poured today between 10 and 2, followed by more sprinkling. The promise is for more dews and damps on the morrow.

But we had only a couple of inches of rain all together at this bend of the river but both north and south of us there was much more. Streets in Shreveport were under water at 6 this morning, one of the main avenues having a foot and a half of water right in the middle and naturally more along the gutters. Somebody mentioned tonight that the game being played in New Orleans was pretty well washed up before it was finished.

On Saturday morning Lloyd Wenk appeared at breakfast. He had come down to spend the day. I saw him at noon dinner and again at 5 o'clock when I went to the store for some things when he said Goodbye until October 18th when he said he was bring six couples to spend a weekend at Pat's camp.

Just as I got back to Yuco, I had a phone call from the store. It was J. H. advising me that Sister with several people had just blown in from Shreveport and were heading toward Yuco. I appreciated his thoughtfulness in letting me know. The first greeting I received was an exclamation that she -- Sister -- didn't know her son was down here. She asked when he had come but as usual in most questions, didn't bother to await the answer.

The people she was with were alright but definitely on the dull side. After we had chatted a moment on the gallery, I invited them to come into the house while Sister scurried off toward the store. Once inside, one of the ladies, paying scant heed to her immediate surroundings, told me that she was more interested in anything she had ever encountered when she caught sight of those big teeth on the gallery and wondered what animal could ever have such frightening bridgework. I couldn't think of any teeth on the gallery and tried to skip the question but she kept coming back to it and so I finally



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excused her and me from the others and asked her to step out on the gallery to point them out to me. She did and with a flourish of her arms directed my attention to the wall just above the bench. She was pointing to the antlers, declaring all the while they must be from some pre-historic monster. I must admit I sometimes do get some fine visitors.

Happily the Shreveport contingent returned to Shreveport eventually and life could resume its accustomed ways.

Mrs. Chapin 'phoned me this afternoon about 5 o'clock to say that her son would drive down to bring me some brownies she had found in Alexandria yesterday and thought I would like. They were indeed brownies but not the kind little Miss Lee knows how to make so much to my liking, the Alexandria ones being more on the candy side. But brownies they are and with them came a big slab of orange cake and another slab of some other kind I haven't even opened, a big pound cake and some smaller cakes. It is all very promising to look at but a little mountainous, especially as Sister had brought a black chocolate cake on Saturday. If I may be so bold as to say so, if you chance to be dying for want of cake, just pass your plate and I shall be glad to offer you all you want for yourself and your neighbors to boot.

Although I had expected mail on Saturday, I had not anticipated any that came to hand, all of it somehow being unusually being on the side of brevity. Marilyn Hudson, the Thursday lady from Town Talk sent an envelope with no message inside, only the picture of the cat, Tom. The card from Mrs. Walker was comparatively brief, too, I thought. Three different secretaries read it to me but it was only when Timmy Chapin arrived and read it to me for the fourth time that the message actually seeped into my dull brain. If you should try reading it without any pause at all or with nothing but pauses between each word, you may get some notion as to how quaint it might sound. From the first three readings, I got the impress on Mrs. Walker's tape recorder was not working and that made me wonder why, if that were so, she should be asking for a tape from me. I had written her last week that my recorder was not working and evidently she had not received my letter.

as I did not hear from her over the weekend, I suppose she will establish contact early in the week.

I heard Meet the Press this evening but find I am not so interested in the over-doing of the political scene as will probably be the case from here on through until the morning of November 6th and I'm not sure if on the 7th we shall have learned how the voters behaved on the pre-ceeding day.....

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Mon day, September 16th, 1968.

**Memorandum:**

It turned warm during the night and moved up into the 90's this afternoon. The sky was fair to partly cloudy and it remains so tonight.

I did not see my 9 o'clock coffee companion this morning. Her sister, Celine, called her sometime during the night to say her husband, Kiri or Kurl or some such name, Roy had been with the family watching TV when he slumped in his chair and was dead. Somebody said they thought he had had cancer for some time. And so Celeste went to Maura's this morning and will remain a day or two.

James appeared about 11 and remained for dinner. It was quite jolly and J. H. who dined with us and James had lots of fun about making arrangements for Lull Hapkins to share the dog house with James' dog for Lull doesn't like warm weather and Mui, the dog, likes Arctic temperatures and so they get that matter all settled to their mutual amusement.

At 5 o'clock, just as I was heading out for supper, a young lady and a young gentleman appeared at my door bearing a bottle of wine. I forget the girl's family name but I knew them well enough. They live in Paul's Church, Oklahoma. The girl, a student at Sophie Newcomb, has just returned from a summer in France and England and was heading for New Orleans and her senior year at college. The young man with her was from England having just graduated from college over there and was making a quick trip to look over America before heading back for home in Britain. I wish they had come earlier so I could have given them more time.

Irvy Knott was down for supper. I don't know why everybody was half an hour later than usual in responding to the supper bell. The clerk was the first to arrive. He said Herace Rand and his wife, Virginia, were talking with J. H. somewhere between the big house and the gate.

supra et ideo I duo non tantum estis duo tantum uno duo  
tantum . . . . .  
tantum et duo tantum estis duo tantum uno duo . . . . .



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They dropped in to say they were just pausing for a moment en route to Alexandria after having taken Blythe to spend a couple of weeks with the Whitfield Jacks in Shreveport. I suppose on behalf of Blythe they brought me a gift of one hundred stamped envelope. I must remember to use one for this memo.

They said Blythe had wanted to stop here on her way to Shreveport but they all felt this first day out of the hospital would be better spent if <sup>not</sup> undertaking too much on the initial release and I thought that very sensible.

Before they left, a secretary appeared but I dismissed him as I had not been within range of the supper table as yet.

About 7:30 Natalie phoned. She told me the same thing Carmen told me about 8:30 this morning. In both instances the person dialing could hear the 'phone ring at my desk and the bell had never so much as tinkled. Natalie mentioned that she had called yesterday several times, could hear nothing but could get no response and she assumed I might be gone out which I had not. One could well skip a lot of calls but nevertheless one cannot help wondering if sometimes a call that doesn't register might be important.

I am sending the newspaper under separate cover. I want to thank you for having mentioned that the column did not carry the title last week. There is no title this week either. Mrs. Row who handled the Sunday paper has been in the hospital two weeks but returned to the office today. I called her to inquire about her good health and the missing titles. She said she did not know how things went at the office during her absence but would check into the matter and restore future titles. I mentioned the absence of the titles to Natalie. --James having remarked this noon that Sunday's paper of this week was again lacking same. Natalie said she was almost sure the had appeared both this week and last and left the 'phone route see for herself but couldn't find the paper.

I was interested to learn that in today's post there was no note from Mary Lee Lambre.

And thus another week gets under way and I seem to have lots to do in anticipation of Pilgrimage. August never showed up today but probably will tomorrow and so another week gets going.....

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Tuesday, September 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:  
A cloudy all morning until 11 o'clock when a thunder-shower, starting up from the south of us, moved eastward and then north and then finally, after swinging toward the west, came slap in on us, dumping an inch of rain before noon. --Rain which the cotton really didn't need. It grew cooler during the afternoon and will sag down to 58 tonight, it is said. Verily September, like summer, is very odd this year.

In the current issue of Holiday there is a letter to the Editor, offering congratulations on the excellence of the article about moving the Central Park obelisk over from Egypt. Yesterday James mentioned the letter to me, saying he had observed to Kay that at least one correspondent must have liked the article, handing her the magazine to the page where it appeared. She read the article and agreed that at least one person must have liked it, having gone to the trouble to write the letter. Kay had indeed read and liked the letter apparently but obviously had not glanced at the signature which, of course, was that of James.

I sent along this week's paper in this morning's post but cannot remember if I mentioned that somewhere in the issue is a likeness of Natalie and some of her grandchildren.

Tonight Lowell Thomas was enumerating Cabinet posts in the Nixon Administration such as Scranton for Secretary of State, Rockefeller for Defense, Morton for Postmaster General and so on. They all sounded fine to me although I must say some of them are shadowy figures so far as my concept of them is concerned. This is particularly true in the case of former Governor Scranton, a man of whom I last sight right after the San Francisco convention 4 years ago and never have chanced to encounter since on the radio. I never did hear his name mentioned as a possible candidate prior to or during the Miami convention and I find myself wondering how it was that he happened to step into the political picture so late four years ago and then never stepped back in again.

Now that Blythe is out of the hospital, I am quite willing to find her accustomed ways for busying herself. I wrote her my final letter of the current series last night.

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thanking her for the gift of envelopes and promising to pester her no more with daily billet-doux. Her children have indicated in one way or another that she did enjoy hearing from people during her hospitalization but she must be rejoicing now that she is once more as free as a bird on the wing and therefore in no need for chit-chat letters from friends around the country. Yesterday her son, Horace, said that the Melrose letters had circulated widely in the hospital during his mother's stay and that his mother had tried to reclaim all of them after they had been passed around. For people who didn't know friends of Blythe mentioned now in the letters, the reading is bound to have been definitely on the dull side but if they pleased Blythe, that is all that mattered.

And speaking of letters, I must say it has been months since I have heard from Mrs. Charles Wood of Wichita, Kansas. I am not anxious to maintain that correspondence since it means little or nothing to me but I am thinking about it now that Pilgrimage is less than 4 weeks away. And this is because she called me one night from Wichita several months ago--perhaps early Spring, I do not remember. But the point of the 'phone call was to ask if she might serve as one of the hostesses at Melrose in mid-October. I told her she might and that was that. Whether she has forgotten the request or whether she has it very much in mind, I haven't the slightest notion since I haven't heard from her. If she should appear, I can find a place for her, if she doesn't, I shall not miss her.

Last night when doing the column, Natalie interjected to say:

"How about hostesses and do you want me to lend a hand...."

She went on to explain she couldn't stand on her feet long which she realized was a prime requisite. I said I had rounded up enough people, I thought, hoping that I might lean heavily on people I scarcely knew or knew not at all since I was opposed to pressing friends into such a wearing job. Of course a flock of socially minded gals think of hostessing as a grand frolic and not until they have started through the mill does it dawn on them what a wearing ordeal the job is. I told her I had spoken to Jane Hall about repeating the job she did last year in Natalie's place, telling her I was leaving it all to Jane and that if she wanted to communicate with her, it was a right so far as I was concerned. I nearly laughed when the last time Kay was here and she volunteered the information that she didn't think she could assist as hostess this year. I remembered a couple of years back when she rounded up a janyou costume and appeared with several other costumed ladies who had to divert their attention to supporting her rather than all joining together to receive the pilgrims. And so turns the pre-pilgrimage pattern and it's going to be so nice when it has all be taken care of....

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Wednesday, September 18th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Clear and pleasantly cool --56 to 82.

Much to my delight, the magpie flew in this morning and in just as lovely a setting as the peckered.

It is so nice to have a glimpse of things as they turn at Lyme and the parchment on which the message came through couldn't be lovelier.

In the same post came the enclosed letter from G. or Kristin Nelson. Circumstances were such that I had no time to jot down the address concerning the Peitler agent and I am wondering if you would be so kind as to jot it down on a slip of paper for me. I shall not be needing it, I suppose for another month and so if it is not convenient to send back right away, that will be alright. I suppose it is good to have both the Theatre Guild and the West Coast addresses when the book becomes available.

And this reminds me I am bound to drop James a line tonight, expressing the thought that in view of the major number of people in the theatrical business who are definitely not too endeared with Arab matters these days, it might be just as well to omit the Arabic word from the title of the book which is, as I recall, Jallen, Arabic Slave Prince of Hatcher. Personally I, myself, find Slave-Prince of Hatcher much more effective as a title but quite aside from that consideration there is this Arab business going on at the present time which probably would not but possibly might influence adversely, even sub-consciously when glimpsed by an Israel sympathizer.

I think I shall sleep readily enough tonight, what with all the physical exercise I indulged in today. Because of the excessive amount of moisture all summer, lots of plants have grown proportionately tall, things like canas, for instance, that have tended to topple over because of their inordinate height. This means that instead of making use of them for backdrops at Pilgrimage time, and bedding them down in November, I am having to...



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eradicate them now at a time when lots of other things are claiming my attention in preparation for making things look pretty in the middle of October. The amount of things being cut down at present is considerable and the need to find substitutes for the places they usually occupy at this time of the year is equally demanding of one's attention. Hence my conviction that tonight sleep should be profound.

This noon while listening to the news from a Shreveport station, I was impressed by my own provincialism in not having immediately recognized a name of a Congressman, pronounced by some new man at the microphone who must be from outside the State. He was talking about Mr. Heeburt from South Louisiana whose name in the Pelican State is always pronounced in the French manner, --Hebert with neither the first nor last letter sounded and the first consonant on the "a" or accented "e" rather than the long "e". It brought to mind how accustomed I had become to the pronunciation of a locality down New Roads way, having heard it first and frequently after the first hearing, as it is pronounced in the False River area where it is called in French rendition: Pointe Coupee. A year later when I heard it referred to in an English rendition, Point Coupee, it took me a second to identify the place in my own mind. On another occasion, too, I can recall now but for only a second, I was taken aback when an old plantation mistress once remarked something about excavations in the Naples region and the wonders of "Pompey-eye". If Lyle were here, he and I would dive into a contest in tossing off a verse about "Mr. Heeburt of Point Coupee visiting Pompey-eye" and a whole evening to tomfoolery would result.

I talked on the phone with I. S. Wilard today. Poor I. S. W., --sweet and yet so confusing. I almost caught myself in the midst of the conversation humming that popular tune, -- "Around the world in 80 days", --so far did we travel up one tangent and down another with my slow mind always miles behind the lady who travels so fast mentally that I find myself still on Canal Street looking toward the Trade Mart building which she has already zoomed around the Eiffel Tower and sailed off in the direction of Pasadena before I have reached Royal Street. She didn't mention her impending European jaunt but somebody repeated today what I had heard a few days before, to wit, that she plans to "do" Scandinavia in November or December which sounds a little on the "air-ish" since that that time of year.

And now for another look at the magpie and thence to a dab of desk work a slab of poukd cake and some beard folding....

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Thursday, September 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Perfect Indian Summer --52--80. At supper tonight, J. H. mentioned that Bertha Haupt died today. I believe her birthday and that of her long time friend, Miss Kate Perkins constituted the only case I ever knew in which life long friends had been born on the same day in the same year. I wondered where J. H. got the information that a long time back, his brother, Joe, asked me to write Miss Kate, suggesting she use her influence on the Haupt sisters to sell him their home which happens to be on the same side of the street, the second house below 406 Williams. I passed along the request to Miss Kate, utterly incapable of comprehending why anyone should suppose the Haupt girls would suddenly sell their home out from under them. Of course Miss Kate declined to do anything of the sort and I passed along the reply to Joe who has been gunning for me ever since. I suppose the clerk or Celeste may have mentioned the matter to J. H., perhaps recently. I, myself, of course, never had mentioned it. It is now approaching 11 o'clock and the cool breeze out of the North is altogether pleasant. I have a loaf of home made bread and butter awaiting my attention when desk work is done. It came from Dee Brandolph, -- "the lady what had the baby".

Her son, Ned, called last night rather late. He asked if he might bring his wife and some people, a Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, whom his wife had known in Africa. We had a little difficulty about arranging a time. He suggested 11 o'clock this morning but that was too close to dinner, especially if one assumes at least an hour would be consumed during the tour. I finally told him any time between 1 and 3 this afternoon would be alright for me. He said he wasn't sure about the exact time as they were traveling by plane.

They arrived at 1:15 and their approach had been announced by a slave so that I came into contact with them under the big oak.

I like B., her son and the latter's wife and I was sorry she didn't make the trip with them but her gift of the bread is going to prove a minor compensation later tonight.

I found the Douglasses charming. I believe they are English but have lived long in Africa. We were busy as bees in our



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chatter and it was nearly 3:30 before anyone had realized where Time had gone. I walked with them to the front gate and as their car was not there, I assumed it was parked by the Post Office and accordingly said goodbye.

Just before supper tonight, Doreatha told me she had seen my company this afternoon and she described their appearance. She lives, as you may recall, by the bridge where the road turns to go in to the Rand camp. She said she had seen them twice, first when they crossed the bridge coming this way around 10 o'clock and then again when they re-crossed the bridge in the opposite direction going back. "Back where?" I asked but she couldn't say. I have puzzled about this ever since, wondering why in the world they should have left their car on the far side of Cane River. Gradually it begins dawning on me that possibly they may have flown up from Alexandria in a plane which they may have parked in a pasture or hayfield somewhere along the road to Montrose. If this is the case, isn't it too bad they didn't mention that fact for it would have been so easy to have had somebody at the store drive them to their plane. Perhaps Ned thought I knew they had arrived by plane since he had mentioned the Douglasses were arriving by that means. For my part, however, I thought he was uncertain about the time of their arrival here because they were flying in from Africa by air and for that reason the hour of their arrival in Alexandria or Calfar where B. lives, was uncertain. The important thing, of course, is that everybody apparently had a pleasant visit although I shall always regret I did not realize they had come by plane rather than by car.

With the weather so pretty, lots of people are making the most of it to get into the big road and lots of them finding their way into the old plantation country. I was mildly surprised while pointing out interesting features in the African House to the Randeloh contingent when three ladies, I believe there were three, descended the African House stairs. I paused for a moment and the ladies stepped out of doors and that was all I saw of them. Later I learned from the clerk they had stopped at the store, one of them explaining Dr. Rand had given her away at her wedding and that she and her companions had seen me while in the garden. And that that, as Thelma Kyser might remark.

I'm wondering about the weekend. The folks across the fence are going to come convention in Little Rock for a few days and I'm wondering if Shreveport will come down for the Haupt funeral tomorrow. So things turn and so I must turn to that home made bread.....

I'm wondering about the weekend. The folks across the fence are going to come convention in Little Rock for a few days and I'm wondering if Shreveport will come down for the Haupt funeral tomorrow. So things turn and so I must turn to that home made bread.....

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Friday, September 20th, 1968.  
Memorandum:

Indian Summer and a little warmer, -170 - 90.  
It has been a busy day and the nicest thing about it has been the letter from Lyne. There were other letters, too. --Blythe, I believe, and so on but I got around to read the letter from Lyne only. I am looking forward to the morrow to proceed with the wealth of enclosures and especially the excerpts from the copies of Antiques. It was so noble of little Miss Lee to winnow out these articles on my behalf and I am really impatient to absorb them. I reckon the copies of the magazines themselves will be arriving early in the week.

And thanks so much for telling me about the ante bellum Hatcher book of which I had heard nothing until reading about it in the Lyne letter. I shall make it a point to inquire about it from the Parish Library on the morrow. I cannot help smiling at the fact that L. S. U. Press should have failed to advise me about this publication for it seems odd that the Press should have missed the opportunity to receive publicity about it in the wake of my letter to the Press in the wake of the appearance of the "Twelve Years A Slave" publicity. You may recall that when that volume appeared, I wrote L. S. U. Press offering to keep them in mind as new books were about to come tumbling off the printer's machine, contributing, as I offered to do, to give such books space in the column. In response, the head of the L. S. U. Press public relations wrote me enclosing reviews of "Twelve Years A Slave" and saying they would be glad to get further reviews of that volume if I cared to have same and referring not at all to my offer to assist in acquainting the reading public with their forthcoming books.

In response to your inquiry about "The Slave" as to whether it is the same play that caused a rumpus at Wellsley or where ever. I had not heard about the latter or, if so, it has skip ed my memory. I have heard a couple of people mention the movie as being the same thing but at the various times I heard this mentioned, I wasn't sure if the people mentioning it knew what they were talking about. I shall inquire about this point, too, for



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one may thus brace one's self against the noise that will ensure when April rolls 'round and the movie is released. I have made a few inquiries about the actual finishing up of the film in Louisiana but nobody seems to have heard anything about it and nobody has heard Beth say if anything was ever shot at Beaufort but from what Philip Langner told me, I gathered that Beaufort would not be used.

Even as little Miss Lee, so did I rejoice that auntie seemed so much like her former self. I intended putting a carbon in the machine when I responded to her letter but discovered I had not only when I was almost through. I did refer to her mention of la Palatine and mentioned the fact that the Orleans branch of the Bourbon always seemed to be able to land on their feet over several generations in spite of the Revolution and the fact that Philippe Egalite lost his head somewhere along the way. I also recalled that after the Revolution and Napoleonic eras, the Orleans family retained its vast holdings, had offices in the Palais Royale and that Alexandre Dumas, pere, had served at one time as a clerk in that office before he struck it rich.

I don't recall ever having read a biography of Gaston, duc d'Orleans whose town house in Paris was the Tuileries. He was said to have been enormously rich and left his estate to his only child, la Grande Mademoiselle. It was from her that Louis XIV acquired, among other things, the dukedom of Maine which he conveyed to his son by la Montespan or was it de la Valiere. I must brush up a little on my 17th century family trees.

I was supposed to have had a man to lend me a hand today in doing some work in anticipation of the impending pilgrimage but nobody showed up. Foolishly I undertook to carry out the job I had planned and did so, removing all the volume from the shelves in the living room--about 10 shelves covering the west wall of the room to right and left of the fireplace and chimney. I carried them all out of doors for a thorough cleaning and felt like a torn down piece by the time the job was finished and the books back in their places. Of course there were interruptions but not by secretaries, all of whom had to fly off down Alexandria way to participate in some kind of a football contest.

I'm so glad progress is being made on the roughfare operations on the home front. May a measure of quiet be realized forthwith.

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Sunday, September 12th, 1968.

Memorandum: It was a quiet weekend and one in which I had an opportunity to get something done in the correspondence department. It is such a joy to have the transcriptions from Antiques and I have encountered so many things going to be helpful in various undertakings.

I had rather expected Shreveport to put in an appearance because of the Bertha Haupt funeral but J. H. mentioned she had gone to San Antonio with Cousin Cora Maude Henry Hicks.

Celeste's nephew, Dan Regard, called his auntie Friday night to say he would be up for the week end, arriving Saturday morning. I learned about it at 9 o'clock coffee when Celeste told me that while she and J. H. would leave early Sunday morning, Dan Regard would remain to dine with me across the fence. She said he would run down to Magnolia Sunday morning, turning here to dine at noon. I couldn't imagine that he would be lingering on here, what with a family and a new house to look after in South Louisiana.

He came to see me just after dinner Saturday noon and we had a very pleasant hour together. He was telling me about his embarrassment of riches in the matter of camellias. It seems he was casting about for a likely site for the home he and his wife were planning to build and ran across just the spot which for years has been the property of a florist. The place had row upon row of camellias and they had to dig up dozens of them to make room for the foundations of their house, leaving undisturbed all those not actually on the spot where the foundations would be put down. I don't know as I ever heard of anyone buying a florist's property as a home site but the idea seems a good one.

We talked politics a little. He says it would appear that Wallace will probably carry the section of Louisiana where he lives. I gather that it isn't so much because people favor that Alabama gentleman but that



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by casting their ballots for him they will be registering a protest vote against Johnson.

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This morning around 8, J. H. 'phoned to say Celeste had some sandwiches for me as they were leaving rightaway for Arkansas. He was waiting for me by the front gallery with the package and we talked about last night's ball games. I did not see Celeste and never heard anything more about Dan Regard who had told me when he called on me Saturday that he wasn't dreaming of remaining up here during the day. That I could understand readily enough, of course.

I did a little reading last night, --the August 4th issue of Look which has quite an interesting story about the last of the von Krupps. I believe it might be by William Manchester.

I also read a short story by Herbert Camus, a unusual sort of study under some such title as "The Fall" but I do not know the original title for this must have been a translation from the French and whether Camus ever wrote anything called La Chute is quite beyond me.

I doubt if the enclosures are of any particular interest but I am enclosing them regardless. The best reason James has for not changing the title of the book is the fact it has already been set up. I have always felt the fact that Jallen had Arabic antecedents might well be played down in the biography, not that it should be omitted but rather that it should not be affixed to the title since, in my opinion, it tends to eliminate some of the theatrical power that is exerted when the two words only, Slave Prince, are employed. But it is his book and he certainly should decide as he pleases about the title.

Mrs. Chapin just called, having returned from New Orleans where she spent the weekend with kin folks. On Friday night her son-in-law had parked one of the trucks belonging to his father's business in front of the son's house about 12:30 with a view to using it at 3 a.m. Saturday morning to go fishing. Somewhere in that interim, the truck had been stolen. It was found Sunday morning, parked in front of a tavern across the Mississippi River, only the air conditioning unit having been removed. Everybody thought it odd the thieves had not removed the tires, engine and so on.

And so autumn has arrived. I didn't here just when but I suppose on Saturday. I hope it was a happy first day of the new season in Lyme....

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Monday, September 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum: I was sorry to learn today that they are going to take down the statue of Uncle Jack in Natchitoches. Everything is hush-hush about it at the moment although a meeting by the City Fathers tonight was scheduled for tonight according to Carmen who heard about it through the Association of Hysterical Women of which she is a member. That organization was asked to appear at tonight's closed meeting but declined on grounds the Association is a private rather than a public or civic body. That point might well be debated but I'll skip it.

According to Carmen, there are, oddly enough, two groups demanding the tearing down of the statue of the old negro. One group is a noisy bunch of youngish politicians of hill bill persuasion while at the same time some organizers of colored segments of the colored population are "about" to call for the destroying of the statue honoring people of color of the old South.

The work will be done, not in the name of bowing before the noise makers, white and black, but rather on the grounds that the street should be widened to provide freer wheeling for traffic. "Progress", of course, is a mighty force in eradicating historic monuments and will be employed to do so in this instance.

I recall that one of the colored magazines carried a picture of the statue a few years ago, complaining about the servile posture of the figure. If it seemed servile to this publication, one would think the hill billies might like it because of that fact. The only remarks by people of color whom I know have invariably been in favor of it, not because of the race the figure represented but simply because the statue seemed to be of a nice friendly old man.

It occasionally happened that plantation negroes took the statue to be a human being. I recall on one occasion Bud Williams, a Melrose son of the soil, once found himself in Natchitoches unable to find the colored friends with whom he had ridden to town. After looking for quite a long time for them, he finally chanced upon the old man....



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tippling his hat in his direction and Bud inquired, after asking about his health, if he happened to know the Browns of Cane River and if they had said anything about when they were going home. When Bud was told that the figure with whom he was in contact was only a statue, Bud failed to comprehend because Bud had never seen a statue and didn't know what a statue was.

James dropped in this noon just as I was returning from dinner. He said Kay had asked the lady doctor to arrange for her to have a check-up at the hospital where Kay is spending today and tonight.

I was glad to have the letter from Helen. I was especially interested in what she had to say about the Mexican pyramids and the Mayan ruins. I was especially glad to learn that Harvard had returned the treasures after the Mexican Government had provided a museum for such relics. I was also learning something when she mentioned what happened to those sacrificed in the great natural cistern, -- those who survived being tossed 50 feet down into the waters of the sacred well. I have read about that custom with shudders ever the years but I never heard before that some of the young men selected for the gods were held to be in disgrace if they did not drown. It somehow recalled one theory that operated in New England when old women were sometimes tied into a chair on the end of a plank and ducked into the water. If and when one of them drown, the debt to society had been paid. If, by some miracle, one of the poor things survived, it only went to prove that she was beyond question in league with the Devil and deserved further punishment.

Verily, that was a prime example of "damed if you do and damned if you don't".

Two members of the Hysterical Association are scheduled to travel down to Beaufort on the morrow to confer with Mrs. C. Vernon Cleutier. At a meeting of the Hysterical Ladies early this afternoon, Beth announced that she is having a large sign made to be erected at the entrance gate at Beaufort to the effect that during Pilgrimage white adults and white children over 12 will be admitted. If that isn't calculated to start the pot simmering close to overflowing, if, indeed, it simply isn't inviting trouble, then only Beth knows the contrary. The President of the Association, Mrs. Kirlin Sutton, and Saidie Tyler whose house in on the Pilgrimage in town are the ones going to tell Beth she can't do the sign thing and if Beth insists, La Tyler will withdraw her house from the Pilgrimage. If a bunch of stupid bags were all put in the same sack, statue contenders and Beth, and the thing were shaken, I know not which would fall out first....

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Tuesday, September 24th, 1968.

Indian Summer lingers on -- 70 to 90.

Great was my delight when the postman handed me the package from Lyme. I hastened home to Yucca and sat right down to have a preliminary go at them. They had

traveled perfectly and it didn't take me two minutes to get them unwrapped and start exploring their pictorial contents. Needless to say, I am enchanted with everything I saw in the first attack which stretched out for more than an hour. Right now they are resting here on my desk and when I finish with this machine, I shall begin examining their contents all over again. Such a handsome gift and such a valuable one for people like little Miss Lee and Lestan who are so concerned with the marvelous range of particulars they cover. I had forgotten how handsomely this publication is set forth, what with the paper, printing and reproduction so worthy of the subjects treated in every issue. The news media devotes so much time to the seamy side of life, it's a pity more time cannot be expended on stressing the beautiful things set forth by this magazine. How lucky am I to have such a blessed messenger directing it to my doorstep.

My neighbors across the fence returned from Arkansas before supper this evening. I saw J. H. at table. He reported a pleasant trip, -- it was some kind of an R. E. A. thing and was held at Hot Springs. He reports that Hot Springs itself is in the doldrums so far as business, gambling, racing and so on is concerned. They were registered at the Argon Hotel where Miss Cam used to stay when visiting that place with Miss Robina whatever friends she used to make the trip with from time to time.

J. H. was quite enchanted with the address made by Wilber Mills to those attending the gathering. He also liked the colored choir that sang for the convention and the prayer delivered by a colored Baptist clergyman of Hot Springs or some place in Arkansas. I shall hear other particulars at 9 o'clock coff on the morrow, I suppose.

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his morning's 7 o'clock news over the local station mentioned the decision taken by the City Fathers last

---I just tore this sheet.....  
last night to remove the statue of Uncle Jack. It is being done ostensibly to provide more street space for traffic. Off the record, however, the Mayor and the municipal politicians state quite frankly,-- but, of course, off the record, that the reason really is to avoid a rumpus over the presence of the statue in its present prominent location. It would appear that for once, at least, both the hill billies and the colored agitators are on the same side in this soufle-- the hill billies complaining about the presence of a statue "to a nigger" while the agitators on the colored side, objecting to what they see as a degrading posture of the figure.  
I. S. Willard called me this afternoon to talk about the matter. She had called the Mayor to see what was to be done with the wrought iron benches,-- memorial benches, that had graced the little semi-circle around the statue. She had given one of these in memory of her father. She told me that her maid, one of the Roque's, I believe, had mentioned to her quite a while back that her brother, for some time in the military, had asked his family when writing him, not to use a post card showing Uncle Jack as his companions in arms would kid him about it.  
Mrs. Duquet whose father, Jack Bryan, had presented the statue to Hatchiteches in 1927, has asked the City Fathers to have the statue crated for storage and she will decide what disposition will be made of it later. I. S. W. told me this and I urged her to call la Duquet right away and advise her to tell the City Fathers that the original gift was not only of the statue but the pedestal on which it stands and request that both the figure and the foundation on which it rests be stored together, it will be so much easier all around whenever it is decided to set it up again at some future although possibly distant time.

James brought me some strawberry ice cream yesterday and just as soon as I do a little on this machine, I'm going to round up a bowl of the stuff, lapping it up slowly as I turn through the lovely pages of Antiques.....

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Wednesday, September 25th, 1968.

Memorandum: I had no cloud coverage but none of the rain Shreveport received. Thermometer 70-80, with a promise of a low of 52 tonight.  
Years ago I may have mentioned visiting Miss Julie Prudhomme at her house on Jefferson Street,-- that Street being the southern extension of Front Street. It is a pretty house of red brick and the upper story has pleasant dormer windows. It is for sale, the three children of Clotilde and Lester Hughes having inherited it. The price asked is thirty-nine thousand which is probably more than it will bring. The Hysterical Ladies are thinking about dicker- ing for it. Tonight at supper, J. H. remarked that Pat would like to buy it. J. H. says Pat spends money as fast as he makes it and doesn't like it when J. H. tells him he will leave his children poor. J. H. remarked further that the trouble with Pat is that he will not save a dollar in contrast to his father, Joe who will not spend a dollar.

The house is where Lestan Prudhomme lived after the Civil War. It is also the house in which Carmen was born, and one of her sisters and her brother. It is built too close to the street where there is much traffic and the lot is not deep, I believe. I think it is not worth thirty-nine thousand dollars since it is estimated it would require another 30 or 40 thousand to put it in order. It will be interesting to see to whom it will eventually go.  
There were a few calls from town today,--all of them concerning Uncle Jack's statue. As a matter of fact, there was one call rather late last night in pursuance of a call I had made a little earlier, pointing out that the statue itself was part and parcel of the pedestal on which it stood and that both statue and pedestal should be moved as a single unit. Last night's call was to thank me for bringing up that point and assuring me that it would, indeed, be preserved as a unit.

Before sunrise this morning, the big machines were



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at work on picking up the monument and whisking it away and before 10<sup>00</sup> clock, one would never have guessed there had been any statue there. Among others who have asked for it is Mildred McCloy for her Bayou Folks Museum but I do not know what disposition will be made of it. Apparently the City Fathers find it a hot potato and were very glad to turn it over to La Ducaet. What right they have to do that, I cannot imagine since the statue was given to the city by Jack Bryan and therefore belongs to the City, I should suppose. It must be it has occurred to nobody including Cousin Arthur, that the metal alone in the statue would have value as you may have noticed in the papers and news media generally, football is traveling hard on the heels of baseball with the season of the former getting into its stride before the latter polishes off its season. My concern about this sport doings is that the schools are doing the same thing which is where I feel the pinch. Last night while enjoying Antiques, I took the opportunity to insert markers in several places, expecting secretaries this afternoon to concentrate on some of the places. But I had calculated without taking football into my speculations, only to discover this afternoon that all the secretaries had flown off to participate in some football exercises and therefore the Antiques and I got precisely nowhere. But tonight I am going ahead with my explorations and inserting of markers regardless.

As between this paragraph and the above, a secretary blew in and blew out, having just got back from where ever the game took place. He said he stopped to tell me he would be passing this way an hour before school time in the morning and thus it appears I am going to start the day off right. As I have noticed in other instances, extra-curricular matters are inclined to provide so much for the school children except an orderly progression in their studies and, in some instances, their opportunities to pick up secretarial compensation which they all seem to need in order to keep going to school to participate in sports.

I. S. Willard called to give me some blow-by-blow accounts of the Uncle Jack business, a sort of summation of what had already been transmitted by the grapevine. She says she is planning to sail October 7th on an Italian liner. I hope the threatened maritime strike doesn't develop for her sake. And now a little desk work, a dab of strawberry ice cream and a slab of pound cake and that will be it for tonight.....

Before sunrise this morning, the big machines were

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Thursday, Sept 3mber 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

It was supposed to be fair today but clouds remained until sundown and the thermometer remained in the 70's and will go again into the 50's tonight.

The nicest thing about today was the Lyme letter of the 22nd which gave me no end of plaisir although the report of Bedlam in the neighborhood spoke of a nocturnal session that must have been trying, to say the least. I find it remarkable that the "love-birds" could have kept things down to a shout prior to the legal joining of the pair, to be followed so soon afterward by such an uproar. In the general scheme of things, it would seem there are quite a few couples who really enjoy knock-down and drag-out exercises periodically and perhaps this is just another case in that bracket. In the few parallel cases I have known about, it is regrettable that the participants seem to like that sort of business every so often so that one grows accustomed to such periodic performances but never did I get used to them. In the suburbs where people occupied separate houses, it was bad enough but in apartments it was impossible and it seemed to me these people were forever moving on their own volition or being asked to move by the operators of the apartment house because of the complaints by the neighbors. And that, of course, is quite understandable.

In today's mail I expected to find today's *Hatchiteches* but it did not arrive. Sometimes it is a day or two behind schedule. When it does come to hand, I shall send it along, thinking you might enjoy as I am sure I am going to relish the striking picture on the front page of Uncle Jack being roped up preparatory to his removal. I believe there is a picture of Mrs. Ducournau;—I have been spelling that odd name oddly, whose father, Jackson Bryan gave the statue to the city.

I got a report from Carmen this afternoon about a meeting of the Hysterical Ladies this morning and, of course,



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I learned several points concerning a wrangle that went on about the statue although the meeting had not been called to discuss it but simply to transact tour business. I think I scarcely need recalling what a panic Sudie Lawton went into at the time. The Hysterical Ladies were going to give an autographing party for the Melrose Plantation Cook Book. Sudie is a racial bigot and made all sorts of strange noises at that time. Today she made an enormous rumpus at the meeting and insisted that the city be forced to put the statue right back where it had stood prior to Wednesday. Now she's all up in arms about concern over the character depicted and has apparently forgotten how much on the opposite side of the racial matter at the time little Miss Hunter and I were to do our gazette. Carmen reports that Beth, also a racial maniac, hepped on Sudie's bandwagon and the two of them tried to get the Association to force the city to return the statue to its former site. The amusing thing about the efforts of these two ladies in their scuffle or would-be scuffle with the city, is the fact that neither of them live in the city but both are residents of the Bermuda area.

Before folding up my beard tonight, I think I shall knock off a column under some such title as "Uncle Jack and All" but what I shall say, I haven't the slightest idea at this moment and in putting something down, I must keep in mind that the piece will not be going to press for another 3 or 4 weeks and, I have no doubt, the majority of people at present so concerned about it, will have completely forgotten it.

I wanted to say before now how much I appreciated the two enclosures in the letter, the Reston about the impending election and the piece about Wallace. I read them slap through after finishing the letter and that is usually an accomplishment for me. It happens that clippings must be held back for another session. I was impressed by the point made in the editorial, to wit, that one difficulty in this present election is the fact that the electorate were not given candidates they wanted or at least to whom they were at best only lukewarm and at the same time, the majority of the electorate while feeling uneasy about many aspects of the present situation, aren't really certain in their own minds how they would like to have any of the problems solved. Hence the nation-wide dissatisfaction all along the line. For myself, I think H.H.H. has the brains and therefore has the greater claim on my ballot.....

How African House got its name

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Friday, September 27th, 1968.

Memorandum

Indian Summer continueth, --55 to 78.

I am enclosing the front page from yesterday's Hatchiteches Times showing some pictures of the statue of Uncle Jack together with the story of its removal by none other than Charles Cunningham. Talk about the sudden disappearance of the statue from its accustomed place still creeps into every conversation and I suppose it will continue echoing for a while. I sent in my column about it yesterday under the caption "Uncle Jack and All". That will app in about 3 or 4 weeks, I suppose.

There were a couple of calls today from people remarking that it now seems odd that the statue remained for 12 or 15 years after having been set up before it ever got a name that became permanent. Up until then it was either referred to as "the statue" or "The Good Daffie". It is said that not until Leston described it as "Uncle Jack" did the popularity of a title catch on. It seemed to me at the time that since the Parish had a fictional character named Uncle Tom, the statue should have a name of its own and since Jackson Bryan had given the money for the figure, the name of his "child" should serve as a tie between Jackson and Jack.

While on the subject of names, I don't recall if I ever mentioned how the African House got its. For reasons that now seem obscure enough and because neither Miss Cam nor Lyle ever attempted to explore the plantation's history prior to 1814, --date of the American State Papers when the Holding of Louis Metoyer was confirmed by the Federal Government, it seems to have occurred to someone that there was a tinge of African antecedents in the Yucca and African House nature. The building now so familiar



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in architectural matters pertaining to Louisiana, people on the place including Miss Cam and Lyle, never referred to it as anything but the mushroom house. As a name, that was alright so far as it resembled in a way an enormous mushroom but, as I was seen to discover, that name was misleading in that lots of people somehow had the impression that that particular building was built for and was continuing to serve as a building in which mushroom culture was carried out, which certainly was misleading since no mushrooms were ever grown there. And so, when the architects from the Historical Buildings Survey came here to make the blue prints for the Department of Interior, they spoke at some length with Miss Cam and me about the place generally and its original purpose. Miss Cam, as she and everyone else had always done, kept referring to it as the Mushroom House. Fortunately, as it seemed to me then and now, I chanced to be standing beside one of the architects as he was working on the blue print sketches when he started to print the name of the building. I immediately jumped into the proceedings by reminding him that although the outlines of the building did suggest a mushroom, the proper name of the edifice was the African House, it being so obviously a re-creation of the Congo type of building. And so it was that the name, African House, was affixed to the original blueprint sketches and from that day forward, the building emerged in the public mind as the African House.

I may have related all this before and it certainly is of no consequence. Nevertheless it occurs to me that you might like to have this notation on how both Uncle Jack and the African House happened to receive their names, each of pseudonym seemingly to have taken hold immediately, once they had been christened.

In view of several claims on my attention during the past couple of days, I haven't taken time to finish reading a letter from Mrs. Walker but shall probably get around to doing so this weekend. I did read enough of the letter, however, to see that she suggested that in case the miniature tape recorder actually turned out to be just a machine and not a gadget really managed by my clumsiness, I might send it along to her since she could find use for it. Needless to say, I wasted no time in packing it up and sending it along to her. Thus comes to an end this machine, much too complicated for me to manage, providing her with an opportunity to initiate correspondence, should she care to do so, in the conventional manner. Her initial impulse was based on kindness, I am sure, but as on other occasions, she had charged through the undertaking without ever mentioning the matter to me, quite incapable on her part of comprehending that physical difficulties made operation of the thing impossible.

And so a new weekend begins and I hold the thought it may be a happy one in Lyme....

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Sunday, September 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Indian Summer continues.

In spite of the fine weather which always brings out road runners, I had only a few Pilgrims on Saturday and none at all today.

Saturday's post brought the August 20th issue of Look magazine and I ran through it on Saturday night. I was interested to run across an article about Craig Claiborne and his connection with the New York Times as its food editor. I don't think there was anything especially new so far as biographical material was concerned but the writer of the article presented what he had to say in an interesting manner. I was impressed by one fact in that the impression of Claiborne's personality as presented in the piece offered a mental picture not at all like the one I have of the man suggesting that different people see the same person differently and at the same time, the combination of phrases employed by one writer to sketch an impression may offer another person already acquainted with the subject a likeness not exactly like the one already held by the reader. Nothing, for example, was said about Claiborne being plump and the writer of the article even points out that this gourmet's weight hovers around 160 and yet somehow from reading the article I found myself picturing the subject as being on the plump side which he certainly isn't. Perhaps that impression came into my mind because reference was made to a dimple and while I realize one doesn't have to have excess weight to support a dimple, the mere mention of one somehow tends to create plumpness in my mental image of the person being described.

In one or two instances in the article and I don't know if it was intentional or not, one might get the impression that Claiborne has wife and children although actually the sentence structure is such that in referring to Claiborne neighbors, one might get the impression Claiborne has offspring which, I believe, he does not and that he is equally lacking in a wife to boot.

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Natalie 'phoned rather early this morning to do a column. She was in good spirits. I was equally so, not the least due to the fact that I learned how to spell a couple of words and I always count it a lucky day for me when I can accomplish such an undertaking. I believe it was in the same column I misspelled two words, --"fiery" and "wholly". We fell to discussing these two items along with some others, trying to imagine how fiery should have turned out as it did since it would seem to have been so much more simple and logical if early creators of the language had simply put a "y" on the fire and let it go at that. As for the word, wholly, neither of us could think of another word of like structure that in its final spelling turned out so differently.

I recalled that a while back I had used the word, twelfthmonth which Ora pointed out was not a year, as I had supposed but merely the single month of December. I could have sworn I had run across the word in Elizabethan English as meaning a year but I must have been wrong. Nevertheless we did discover the word, twelvemonth, meaning not one month but an entire year and that must have been what I had in mind when I wrote it twelfthmonth rather than twelvemonth. The fact that I never see a word in print to get some visual notion as to how it should look, I am doubly interested and anxious to get my feet set on the right track on words which I am forever misspelling. The more I consider the spelling of the word, fiery, the stranger it seems that the vowel should have been pushed around the way it is and apparently with no reason at all.

I am enclosing the obituary of Bertha Haupt. I think I mentioned a while back that she and Miss Kate Perkins had the unusual distinction of being old, old friends whose natal day and year came on the same date. Having birthdays on the same date as one friend or another doesn't seem so unusual as we can all probably recall people whose natal dates are identical but to have the day and year of two old and intimate friends does seem unusual.

I have saved to mention at the last paragraph my delight in discovering the lovely likenesses of feathered friends in Saturday's post. I shall treasure this particular likeness especially since it will provide me with an opportunity to cast an eye on one of the closest companions of little Miss Lee and I shall accordingly feel these two companions are the closer to me because of their intimacy, the one with the other.....

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Monday, September 30th, 1968.

Memorandum: Indian Summer lingers on. Today's post brought the lovely card bearing the likeness of the bouquet of flowers, withal Directoire in its classicism with its Grecian contours and its 18th century floral arrangement.

I appreciate the thoughtfulness in reporting the absence of the memo. From it's date, that is, of the omission, I take it that it must have been having to do with the Saturday visit of Dan Regard, the new home he is building in Newberia on the site of a former nursery still graced with many a camellia plant and so on. It may also have had something about the departure on Sunday morning of the folks across the fence for Hot Springs and so on. I usually send out quite a few letters on Monday morning and, of course, cannot recall to whom I may have been writing on that occasion. Except on very rare occasions, I never send butterfly lilies to anyone except little Miss Lee although I sometimes tuck in a blossom when writing Esther and Helen who seem to be fond of them. I have no doubt they would return a memo promptly although it is possible, of course, that they accepted it as something intended for them but that seems unlikely. Be that as it may, I shall inquire of them the next time I write Salt Meadow.

As so often happens, today's pilgrims and secretaries contrived to arrive at intervals within each others' orbits and I must check on the date again to note for sure if the date I have in mind for the missing sheet is the one mentioned in the letter from little Miss Lee.

I rejoice that as the weekend approached, the weather was so pleasant where little Miss Lee made the most of the opportunity to communicate in the big open spaces. I like the account of the setting, the clouds, the buildings, the flowers and all. If memory serves, Indian Summer usually appears to advantage in Lyme the last weeks of September. Usually it goes over into October at this bend of the river but this year's calendar has been so unusual that we have been receiving our delicious days of autumn a little ahead of time on this go 'round.

It goes without saying that I was pleased to learn that little Miss Lee and I re-dated along parallel lines to the letter from the Squire regarding the title of the book.



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Monday, September 30th, 1968

I talked with James on the 'phone this afternoon. He had been to Alexandria today and seem enchanted to find himself back home again. He reports that his wife remains in the hospital to enable the lady doctor to try out some further feeds for her diet. He said she is doing alright but apparently it seems better all around and, I suppose, especially to the doctor that she remain there until the tests and the diets have been completely explored. I gather it is generally understood that this sort of thing has happened before and is likely to be repeated which is to say that all will be settled to everyone's satisfaction save that of the patient who will not linger long in the hands of one physician before turning to another, clever and corrupt enough to play on whatever tendencies toward hypochondria.

Tomorrow we are scheduled to have stuffed bell peppers and quite by chance, James has happened down this way, on recent occasions when we have. He has happened down to have them. I warned James, however, that tomorrow's bell peppers may not be quite up to Dereatha's usual high standard. This is because on Saturday morning I was checking over the bell pepper situation while making some recommendations at Ghana to August. Before leaving that particular parterre, I chanced to remark that there seemed to be ample supplies and that we would pluck some next Tuesday for the kitchen. Half an hour later, I chanced to be in the library at the big house when I heard Dereatha come down on August like a ton of brick, saying she would like to know why he had brought her such a big basket of peppers, knowing that they were planned for next Tuesday. He reppended blandly that while he was in the garden, he thought he might as well pick them on Saturday against the following Tuesday use of same. I guess they are keeping alright in the icebox but somehow the whole thing doesn't seem to jibe too well with what is known as fresh vegetables.

I dropped a line to Louisiana Heritage today, pointing out that Pilgrimage is in the offing and that if they cared to send some discs and slides on consignment, they might do so. There are so many factors to influence a single weekend, -- rain, sunshine, temperature and so on, that it is impossible to guess in advance if there will be pilgrims present or not.

Father Anthony rushed up to me at the Post Office this morning, saying he had read the Plantation Memo about Vaux-la-Vicomte and that as he had stopped there when in Europe recently, he was delighted to read what a neighbor had to say about it.....

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Tuesday, October 1st, 1968.

Memorandum: The Indian Summer pattern continues to hold. Preparations for the Pilgrimage continue both in town and country. Carmen phoned me this morning to say she had received reservations for nine bus loads of people from some place in Texas in the days mail. I suppose the travel agencies must line up customers from around and about the Gulf States area. I must say I am surprised so many people would plan to come en masse from a single town.

On the home front, I continue making what preparations I can and things seem to be going along alright. On leaving the 9 o'clock coffee cups this morning, mine hostess remarked that she would be in town tomorrow morning and that she anticipated going with her husband to New Orleans for a couple of days. From this I take it that her plans for the following week must be pretty well in order.

I was interested in the account J. H. gave of today which he spent in Shreveport. He said he had been a round to see Dr. Wenk and found him a gay spirits and big as a house. I should not have been surprised, I suppose, but I was when J. H. reported that Dr. Wenk had told J. H. that he, J. H. would never get well from his heart difficulty. I had never thought Dr. Wenk was endowed with the stuff that make a good psychiatrist and, naturally I felt the same thing even more at that report.

Cotton picking seems to be just about at the point of inception, so many plantations having begun the harvest yesterday. One plantation or another has been gathering the lint for two or three weeks but the full tide didn't seem to get going until this comparatively late date. From year, depending upon various circumstances, the time for harvest varies. Often I think of it as being about September 1st but it is later this year because vegetation was later all along from Spring planting until now. This year's



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heavy rains made the plants heavier in foliage and lighter in bowls than is usual. The density of the leaves tended to keep the sun from getting down into the lower stems of the plant with a result that lots of the bowls turned black and failed to open. Should there be a prolonged dry autumn, some of these lower bowls might eventually open but whether it will remain dry or not is anybody's guess. Thus far in this area this season, the picking has been done by hand. I suppose the mechanical pickers will begin operating as soon as the plants have produced their maximum of bowls and the heavy leaf congestions are eliminated.

Three bridge parties. I know of were in full swing this afternoon. Celeste had twelve in for cards and I was glad the weather was so pleasant for her and her guests. Carmen phoned me tonight to tell me she had been at cards during the afternoon and brought home aprize. The reason she called me was to read me a little from a niece in California whose 18 year old son started college this year. I was interested in the institution, situated somewhere in the Santa Cruz area, --somewhere north of Los Angeles and is one of several recently inaugurated in which registration is limited to six hundred students and numbers in ever class held down to fifteen. Such low numbers ought to provide the students to establish some kind of personal contact with their teachers. I should like. This type of college is located in the country which, I assume, makes it easier for the students to spend more time on the campus and less in the big urban centers. This particular institution is on a mountainside, overlooking the Pacific and is laid out in a grove of big redwoods. It sounds like the type of setting Plato fashioned for his Academy. It is interesting that Carmen's great nephew had a choice of several large colleges, --Southern Cal., Berkely and so on but he had the good sense to select the one that offered lots of fresh air and blue sky and whatever the advantages are of scholastic surroundings and associates. In these decades of bigger and bigger enrollments, it is heartening to know that for those who want them, there are schools designed for widening the students' horizons. Tom and Tomtom are eyeing me through the screen door, waiting to take a little turn in the Ghana garden for the moon is pretty and the temperature just right.....

15740

Wednesday, October 24, 1968.

Memorandum: This evening but the sky remains 20 percent chance of rain this evening but the sky remains gloriously clear and moon-drenched. We are promised 60 percent chance for rain in the morning and I trust we get no more then than we are not receiving tonight.

I can't feel too nervous about the prospect of a shower for I planted some more things for the autumn garden today, -- greens, turnips, cabbages and things and a little shower would lend them encouragement but which ever way the rain clouds go will be alright with me.

I have my entire morning taken up for Thursday and on top of that I received a phone call this afternoon, asking for an appointment for 10:30 in the morning with some Hysterical Ladies with a photographer, bent on taking some picture for Cane River scenes for the newspapers of the State to be published this coming weekend.

I have already decided on a few spots that might make interesting photographs, none of which have been used before. When the Hysterical ones appear, I can easily direct them to the spot I have chosen and they can snap them with me if they want to and they should take not more than 15 minutes. If they want some other scenes of their own choosing, and themselves in the pictures, that will be alright with me since I propose to remain with them precisely 10 minutes and that will be that, so far as I am concerned.

So cial news along the river is pointed up by an announcement on the part of Noemie Baptiste, formerly the wife of several different gentlemen, some at the same time, some at other times. This is the lady who married Jack Marcel Morris a few years ago and was familiarly known among local acquaintances as The Bride. Noemie, after stabbing Coke to death a few weeks back, decided to move to move from the former home of the artist near the spillway on Cane River to Little River. Not far away on some bayou or other lives one of the Creighton boys, a young man not over-weighted with gray matter. It seems Mr. Creighton has been selected to be the lucky groom and Noemie has announced there

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will be a wedding celebrated on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday will follow a infair at the local henkey-tenk. This has given quite a turn to all Heenie's friends if she has any and all her acquaintances because it runs counter to all Cane River customs which have always followed a pattern of having the wedding and the infair on the same day. It is quite true, of course, that Heenie doesn't know what she is up to but that cuts little ice with the general scheme of the social calendar and the nuptials and the reception will be held on successive days if that is the way she decides it.

I believe Mr. Creighton's first name is Irvis. I suppose he may be in his 20's while the bride will be only 40 or 50 which is about the proper balance if the groom ever hopes to keep abreast of the bride in general activities. If memory serves, it seems to me that on all previous marriages on the part of the bride and there have been many, a magical date is usually hit upon and then the wedding almost always fails to come off for about a week or sometimes two or three weeks following the date originally set. But that doesn't make any difference since it provides Cane River society with an opportunity to provide a longer twittering and speculation as to whether the nuptials will be celebrated at all, as sometimes they are and sometimes they aren't.

In one respect, Irvis may count himself in luck if he does become Heenie's husband since Irvis has never been legally married and points with pride to no offspring whereas the prospective bride already has a flock of children on her own account and the efforts of several unknown gentlemen so that Irvis, by permitting the knot to be tied, will find himself already possessed of quite an imposing family, none of whom he may refer to as parent by his own exertion.

When I pause to ponder on the fact, I seem to recall quite a few young gentlemen of my acquaintance who have acquired families without much effort on their own part. Off hand I can think a half dozen such young men who have married, legally or otherwise, the wives of husbands who have gone to spend some years as guests of the State at the Angola institution while the wives, remaining at home, discover yeSghful helpers in the young gentlemen who so frequently discover steady companions and sharers of the family hearth with ladies who have already run up quite an imposing number of you gsters, ostens bly sired by husbands currently languishing in prison. The husbands seem to like the housing arrangements in jail and the wives during their absence keep the homes fires burning and the crackles rocking merrily so, in a manner of speaking their absent husbands do not fall behind in increasing the number of their offspring while away from home for a decade or two. And so the world turns and the population increases and life flows merrily along.....

15742

Thursday, October 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy, humid and warm with a promise of rain. Static knocked out radio reception around 6 o'clock so I assume sprinkles may begin any time.

My program started off somewhat out of kilter and remained in that condition until after dark. To begin the turning of the wheels and reels, I had my weekly program all laid out but that had to be adjusted in view of the crying need for some local pictures for publicity purposes for the Pilgrimage. Margarita Suttan, the President, had a couple of people on her string and who a certain Mr. Murphy, a photographer, may have been I do not know.

At breakfast I learned that some of the Reidheymers from up Kampti way had phoned the merchant planter yesterday afternoon for an appointment covering this morning and he had forgotten to tell me. He and Celeste left this morning for a couple days in New Orleans.

And so with other guests already here, the Louisiana Heritage phoned this morning. It was in the nature of a response to my inquiry about sending some of the discoper the Pilgrimage trade. To my surprise, I learned that the disc in question was sold out, there being only 4 of the items in their entire stock. I was asked if I should like to have them send those and I responded negatively. It does seem odd they should let their supply run so low and I indicated my surprise. I was advised a new issue would be available within 4 to 6 weeks which would scarcely be of much help for any demands a week from Saturday.

I was advised that the set of 100 slides that illustrate the record will be available by mid November. I wonder if one may see them for Christmas. Kenneth Mett, the gentleman who was calling, reported that.....



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the Heritage magazine is now being printed. He said the cover had just been received and that he would send me one of these covers right away. I believe it is a sketch in color of Jackson Square in New Orleans. He said there was an article about Leston and another by Leston which came as no great surprise. I shall of course send along the aforesaid cover whenever it comes to hand.

I. S. Willard called when things were twirling at a fairly brisk rate of speed. Thinking to speak with her at a more leisurely moment, I told her there were people here and that I should be glad to call her back presently. With no end of errrrrrrrrr-ing and ahhhhhhhh-ing, she explained that she had just one thing she wanted to ask me and then launched off into an approach to the question which must have taken up 14 minutes, finally coming out with the question: Did I chance to know anybody who would be driving to Shreveport next Thursday which was the magical moment she was planning to go there to catch her plane for New York. Off hand I couldn't think of anyone but told her I would call her back after I had a moment to think about it. I suppose I know people going to Shreveport frequently but more often I know that they have been there only after they have returned. Then she switched into speculating about the plans her son and his wife may or may not have for flying from Bonn to St. Louis sometime during the time she herself will be in Europe but as I couldn't throw any light on that problem, I finally succeeded in getting detached from her wire and that was that.

A call just now from town indicates that Natchitoches has been having quite a shower but in spite of our cloud coverage, we haven't received any moisture as yet. I think I shall step out and sprinkle the seeds planted yesterday on the theory that a little moisture will encourage the seeds to germinate and if it rains after that, they ought to thrive with added gusto.

Someone today mentioned that the school kids in the town's town staged some kind of a protest demonstration yesterday because they wanted to State athletic field be turned over to them for their use in certain games. The State didn't see it that way. I guess the news media were wrong in not reporting the matter at all which, without farfare, the youths may not be so interested in scuffling.....

15744

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Friday, October 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

It never did get around to rain last night but the cold wave passed this way dropping the temperature down into the 50's. Today was fair and rather chilly around 70.

I seem to be running a Denholme margin on this sheet and I hope this adjustment will improve it a little.

The nicest thing about today was the arrival of the post bearing a letter from Lyme. I cannot begin to say how much every word of it meant to me and how much I appreciate the enclosures. You would be impressed, too, if you realized how much I learned from the references made to news items discovered in the paper by little Miss Lee. For instance, I had heard nothing about the Chicago jaunt and nothing about the doings at the Madame Aubin Roque house. There must be only certain types of minds who retain what they scan for more than 2 seconds. When I consider the number of people I encounter within a day and how often, in response to my queries about what the papers report, I always receive the same word in reply: --"Nothing".

And, before quitting the newspaper, let me say how much I appreciate your kindness in letting me know about the somewhat odd spelling accorded the name of one of the columnists. Immediately on advising me about this matter a short time back, I called the Editor suggesting a correction. I assumed that would be taken care of the same day. I shall make another call on the morrow and see if I have any better luck. I am told that within recent years there has been less and less proof reading in all newspapers, large and small and that the amount of errors currently showing up are definitely on the increase and that owners of most newspapers don't seem to mind. "Different times, different manners" must be the adage to suit this new trend.

I am sorry I failed to acknowledge receipt of the Poitier address. I had fully intended doing so but I must have been carried away by the sight of the pretty



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friends on the card accompanying the notation. I have filed it away, --the address not the feathers, and shall be making use of it shortly, I trust although I have heard nothing from the author lately and so do not know anything about the release date, originally scheduled for this month.

Today was about as busy as yesterday which was fairly brisk. Somewhere along the way during the past 24 hours, I got round to knock off a column under some such title as "Ghost with a Soul" or some such, the topic being an account of Rodney, Miss., the old ghost town I used to like so much. I am happy to say the United Daughters of the Confederacy are backing a restoration project for the little old Presbyterian church dating back to the ante-bellum times of the planter, David Hunt, who contributed to the building of this charming edifice. I suppose the column will appear in about a month but Heaven alone can tell if the thing is worth printing.

This afternoon about 4 when I was rushing to finish some things and get ready for some secretarial assistance, callers arrived. It was Jack Fullilove and wife and Dr. and Mrs. Somebody from Shreveport. The Somebodies or whatever their name may be are just as nice as the Fulliloves. I think he may be organizing some scientific thing for L. S. U. in that institution new school of medicine in Shreveport. They have just returned from South America following some kind of business in Persia or whatever that country is now styled. --Iran, perhaps. They have also been doing some things for the Government in convulsive southeast Asia. I asked his opinion about remaining or getting out of that place and without hesitation he said he thought the best policy was to withdraw just as quickly as possible.

La Fullilove mentioned she had chatted with Blythe on the phone this morning and that Blythe said she expects to return to her Alexandria home during the coming week. She could also pass along news of Randy and Dian Jack who have pursued this southward trip successfully and have left Panama for Costa Rica where they will be tonight. I hadn't thought about using a telephone on such trips north and south although east-west communications seem casual enough. The Randy Jacks will eventually pass this way before long on their way to their new home in Seattle and will pass along tourist impressions while passing by.

I hold the thought the autumn flowers may linger long in the Lyme gardens.....

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Sunday, October 6th, 1968.

#### Memorandum:

Saturday was cool and cloudy, raining during the night and a little warmer and still cloudy with the thermometer still in the lower 70's.

On Saturday morning from the big house came the sound of a familiar Shreveport voice. Celeste and J. H. had returned from New Orleans about 6 o'clock. It seems that Sister and Lloyd blew in about 8:30. They returned to Shreveport sometime Saturday evening.

It's remarkable how things invariably go into a tail-spin on such occasions, one twist being that the mail intended for Saturday morning posting failed to reach the Post Office before the departure of the post rider. Accordingly I am enclosing Friday night's memo with this one.

On Friday morning but for other circumstances, my column for Natalie failed to go forward and accordingly I asked the clerk to post it for me in town when he went to Hatchiteches Friday after supper. I wanted to get it to her in Saturday mail so she could check on one or two things in it before too long a time elapsed between writing it and reviewing it. But it failed to reach her and as she will be out of town until Tuesday night or Wednesday, I shall have to remember as best I can.

It seems there is to be a special Mass said in New Orleans on Sunday or Monday. It has something to do about the opening of the State Supreme Court and R. B., as Knight of Saint Gregory, perhaps and also, possibly because he is a judge, will be present as will his wife.

After that, they go to Alexandria for Monday or Tuesday where Bishop Greco will be celebrating his fifty years as a priest. It seems to be quite an affair with many invited guests including the Knights of St. Gregory and their wives and other prominent church people including Cardinal Cushing of Boston who is an old friend of Bishop Greco. All in all, it appears to be quite an occasion and I'm glad Natalie especially is able to attend.



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In response to inquiry about the book review about "Twelve Years a Slave", I am sorry I did not get an opportunity to read the review although my attention was called to it over the phone. Professor Mesley or however the reviewer spells his name is none other than the head of the English Department of which Natalie is a member. He hails from Mississippi and doesn't seem to be popular with some members of his staff. It would appear from the paragraph of the review, read to me, that Professor Mesley had dragged Uncle Jack into the piece by main force and awkwardness. The review itself appeared on the Sunday preceding the Monday meeting of the Town Father when they decided to whisk Uncle Jack away. Everyone I have heard mention the review expressed shock everyone.....an interruption in the middle of the preceding sentence may have caused it to turn out oddly. But anyway, a couple of days after the book review appeared, there was a faculty meeting and Professor Mesley, taken to task on some other matter, complained that he had already received a thorough drubbing about the final paragraphs of the review and felt he had received enough brickbats for one week.

Saturday's post brought some advertising cards from Louisiana Heritage. From what source, I am not sure, one is given to understand that the first issue of the publication will appear sometime in November. It goes without saying, of course, that I shall see to it and little Miss Lee's name is on the list to receive the first issue. Although nobody asked my opinion on the matter, I don't mind saying I think November is a poor time of the year to launch such a periodical, what with all the flurry of holiday advertisements flooding the mails, not to mention all the other types of holiday material sweeping everybody's communications during the holiday season. Perhaps letting the disc supply run out completely is just another example of this organization's tendency to act first and plan things out afterward.

The other day I mentioned Town Talk of Alexandria, for no reason imaginable, re-printed a May column of Plantation Memo, omitting the one which was scheduled to appear. Yesterday they re-printed the one about the Longwood and Vaux-le-Vicomte which had just been published along about the 20th of September. Somebody in Town Talk must be off the track and readers seeing the columns are screaming for gaps missing in their scrapbooks and so it goes.....

15748

15748

Monday, March 7th, 1968.

Memorandum: Fairness the cool side, --50 to 70.

As you may have already noticed, the missing memo has turned up. As I understand it, the date line is somewhat unexpected, --something like Sunday, September 120th or some such but, under the circumstances, perhaps we should be willing to let it off at least 100 days to bring it around to the date originally found wanting.

It is my custom to insert a fresh butterfly lily just before sealing the envelope, daily to little Miss Lee, every week or so to the Salt Meadow ladies. I had a few letters on my reading machine here beside my desk, all of them awaiting attention at some future day when circumstances permitted. Obviously I removed the Memo and placed it on them and then failed to return the Memo when the lily was enclosed in the envelope. Having checked through the different items twice before, I checked a third time this evening, discovering one instead of or rather two instead of one pieces of paper, the one being from --of all things, --from the Chicago Police Force for which I was searching, --the paper, not the Force, and lo! there appeared the missing memo. Fortunately, in case it had been lost, it was of no importance, but it is good to know that the record has been set straight regardless.

While it's on my mind I want to mention a name, heard on yesterday's radio, that intrigued me. I may even have mentioned it yesterday but don't mind repeating it. The announcer was claiming scant attention on my part as he ran through the names on the Texas casualty list but the name somehow sounded so unexpected, I remembered it. It was some lady killed in an automobile accident, --I don't ever recall where, but her name was the thing, -- Mrs. Dora Zamora or Zamora. It was said that Mr. Zamora was injured in the 4 to smash-up but that Dora Zamora didn't and I thought that especially lamentable, any lady with such a unexpected name and that's all there is to that.



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They tell me the Church is getting busy across the river in preparing for its annual fair. I haven't seen any of the reverend fathers with the past few days and don't know if Father Calahan has arrived back in Cane River after his stay in Arkansas where he had expected to remain permanently after leaving here in the Spring. But it turned out that Arkansas left much to be desired so far as he is concerned and so he is returning here to take up his permanent retirement. I hope things turn out pleasantly all around but I sometimes wonder how things go when a successor in full charge takes over and then the predecessor returning, finds the institution possessed by both an ex-director and a present one. Father Fredericks is the present one, assisted by the Polish number, le Pere Antoine whom some of my mulatto acquaintances, short on English, describe as "ain't bein' worth for a damn."

On the matrimonial front, the grapevine reports that the widow, Noemie Baptiste Morris, did not take unto herself a husband over the weekend. When asked about the matter, the man who had been dubbed the prospective groom explained he knew nothing about the lady's intentions. It seems she had asked him to cart her iron heater from Cane River to her new residence on Little River and inasmuch as he had rendered that service, Noemie interpreted that to mean that he was all in favor of wedding her whenever she named the weekend but somehow it didn't seem to turn out that way. Well, there will be other weekend with possible duplicate grooms to boot, --or even the same one.

Today a passing pilgrim mentioned that the local artist has jacked up her prices on paintings another five or ten bucks. It seems the artist is getting more and more grandchildren and especially great grandchildren and she declares she isn't going to leave any money for the children to quarrel over and so she is giving away all her furniture to her grandchildren and re-furnishing her own cabin with the latest bits of interior pieces from one or another of the many time-payment operators. Her granddaughter, Dolores, has a husband who likes such arrangements since he has loudly proclaimed to all the members of the family including his wife and her gifted grandmother he isn't dreaming of ever doing a day's work in his life and so the present set-up seems ideal from his point of view, what with grandma furnishing the granddaughter's cabin with discarded pieces and tossing food in everybody's direction, not to mention an occasional cast-off automobile.....

15750

15750

Tuesday, October 8th, 1968.

Memorandum: Cloudy until noon when the sun came out and sent the thermometer from last night's 50' up to this afternoon's 80's.

I am sorry to say I accomplished nothing today and I am beginning to feel the time squeeze as between now and Saturday's Pilgrimage.

Yesterday noon the TV station, KTB, Shreveport, sent some camera men to Natchitoches to take some pictures of town houses. At 5:30 last night and again at 10:30, the station put the film on the air. Strangely enough, TV immediately demonstrated what publicity can do in the persons of pilgrims. --Shreveport, Many, Monroe, who put in an appearance, not in Natchitoches, although they probably did appear there, but in the Cane River country as well although Cane River plantations had not been mentioned.

All the people invading the place were pleasant enough but they took up time, --senselessly, it seemed to me if what they said might be considered true since in each instance they declared they were planning to attend Saturday's Pilgrimage but merely wanted to get an impression of the region before hand. Why the store permitted any of them to enter, I cannot imagine.

About 10:30 James put in an appearance. He said he had remained at home all last week awaiting the services of an electrician. It seems at one or another of the houses, there was a new icebox which was just fine except that it didn't make ice. As I have heard in other problems with electricians, they never keep their appointments, their promise to be there in an hour may run anywhere from several hours to several days and it's all very distressing. For James, since he spends much time at home anyway, it isn't quite so bad as it is for work-a-day people who stay off the job awaiting the magician and end up by losing their wages and still not seeing anything of the workmen. Life was ever thus, I suppose.

Kay is home and seems to be feeling alright. It seems the lady doctor, after every sort of test imaginable had been



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run, came up with the same conclusion as on previous occasions, to wit, that the patient has simply been starving herself because of a delicate nervousness around the middle which has frightened the patient from eating normally. By going off on crack-pot diets recommended by one quack or another, she has simply denied herself adequate nourishment, thereby making herself feel like "a torn down piece" and wondering the while that she doesn't feel better.

I inquired about the book and we chatted at some length about it although I didn't get anywhere in trying to find out when it is expected to appear. As I recall, I didn't learn in advance as to the time the "Shadows of Old New Orleans" was going to make its bow until after it had made it. I got the impression the volume is currently being bound and, if so, I suppose it should be to hand within a couple of weeks but that is only a guess, of course, on my part. Perhaps the author is superstitious about counting on it ever appearing, it has had such a long preliminary period of incubation.

Between 3 and 4, I thought I could begin starting my day's labors but I was in error. Father Calahan, having just arrived from Arkansas to resume his residence in retirement at the church across the way, dropped in to see me. Le pere Antoine was with in. I am always glad to see them and we did have a lot of ground to cover since last we compared notes but I must confess it assisted not at all in catching up with jobs that were crying for attention. Oh, well, tomorrow will be another day.

I nearly forgot to say that the artist paid us a visit just after dinner this noon. It wasn't for the charm of my hospitality she came but rather to ask James why he could not get her any canvas to paint on. The sources of supply in town were out of materials and she thought maybe he might run up to Shreveport "or some place". And so the artist will be short of her ingredients even as Lestan will be without discs and we can all collapse together.

And now for a dab of feed, a few letters and that will be it for today, I trust.....

15752

Wednesday, October 9th, 1968.

Memorandum: I have read  
Foggy and warm this morning. Cloudy and much cooler  
tonight. About 2 o'clock this afternoon a sudden gust of cold  
wind blew out of the north. A clap of thunder -- just one --  
was loud enough to wake the dead. It sprinkled a little  
but evidently hasn't quite made up its mind  
to go ahead and pour or merely get colder and turn  
fair again on the morrow. It goes without saying, one would  
like to have whatever showering it is going to do right now  
and not put it off until the end of the week.

I concentrated on the chapel this morning and the  
freshly laundered draperies look quite spiffy.  
A little after 11, J. H. brought me the Presbyterian  
minister from Hatchitoches. It was the first time  
I had met him and I have no idea how long he may have been  
at his present post. I understood J. H. to say the  
divine's name is the Reverend Apple. Sub-  
sequent information confirmed that J. H. was right. I  
don't recall ever having heard, lay or clerical, bearing such  
an ancient fruity name. If I weren't  
tired, I might try conjuring up the names of some  
other divines in the Parish such as the Reverend Jelly  
Harper just to see what kind of rigamarole I might cook up  
with the collection.

I chatted for a few minutes just before supper with  
I. S. Willard. She is scheduled to leave on the  
morrow, flying from Shreveport at night for  
Manhattan where she evidently will remain for a few  
days. She was so busy telling me about "these little  
vines growing along the gallery" -- something she  
had to separate from each other, etc., etc., about  
which I knew nothing that for a moment I  
(?) was fearful she wouldn't get them untangled before  
she got headed out for Europe. She said  
she expected to be back within about 3 months. In view of  
her expectations regarding anything having to do with time  
leaves her agenda sufficiently elastic to make it  
possible for her to put in an appearance almost any  
old date as between now and, say, the 4th of July or  
Labor Day. Like little Miss Alberta, she leads  
a charmed life, especially when in the big road and I  
have no doubt she will be astonishing all of us by the  
adventures she survives all along the way.



15753

15753

1968, October 10th

Last week I thought I had harvested the entire Quince crop. The individual quinces were nice enough but the crop wasn't extensive, only a few bushels but there were enough to produce a marvelous perfume after I had put them in the living room at sundown, closing the doors and windows for the night and then bursting open the doors next morning and inhaling deeply as I stepped in. Several people had been inquiring about the availability of quinces this year and at first I had supposed there were none but I was glad to discover I had been mistaken. I got rid of the entire lot the first day, the Jack Fulliloves being especially enchanted to take all that was left for they like to make Quince Jelly. --and why I used capitals, I don't know. And then today I discovered some more that had somehow eluded me while still hidden among the leaves on the branches. I rounded up a big basketful and, it goes without saying, I have them, too, impregnating the living room again tonight. As fruit, they aren't very pretty but as they are about the size of one's two fists, they will make excellent filler for semi-concealed spaces in some of the arrangements I shall contrive for Saturday and Sunday and at the same time they will add a faint touch of their mildly aromatic fragrance that will blend with stronger perfume of flowers & will be used in the same rooms with the vegetable and fruit combinations.

I had intended to enclose a note from Miss Denholme but inadvertently disposed of it along with some other things for the trashbasket. I had inquired how the political winds were blowing in her fair city. She didn't mention how the town was blowing which wasn't necessary since the Shreveport Times is always more or less against anyone in power and always if the person in power is a Democrat. She said that she hadn't quite decided as yet but she believed she would cast her ballot for Wallace. In the event she did change her mind, however, she would vote for Nixon. I believe that pretty well represents what most people in Shreveport will do.

I am not so concerned at the moment about candidates as I am about satisfying my hunger. There's some pound cake and some chocolate milk in the icebox and I'm heading in that direction forthwith.....

15754

15754

Thursday, October 10th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy in the 60's although the sun did send a few feeble rays forth about sundown but the clouds returned. I didn't hear any weather reports covering the impending weekend.

Natalie called a little later than usual last night. She wanted to run through a column and I was glad to do so since I like to run through such items before so many days have gone by that I have forgotten what I may have been driving at.

After the column, she had something to say about the red mass in New Orleans on Sunday or Monday and the Bishop Greco festivities in Alexandria on Tuesday. It went off swimmingly in both places.

She reported Cardinal Cushing looked much more robust than a few months back when, if you recall, he was quite ill on the train trip from New York to Washington at the time of the Kennedy funeral. She reported his costume was quite elegant at the red mass, --an ermine stole and a scarlet robe covered with white lace. He brought the Bishop a gift of ten thousand dollars for whatever project cared to make use of it. Everybody is crazy about the Bishop and apparently everything turned out beautifully.

At the red mass in New Orleans, the archbishop was assisted by three boys, one white, one negro and one in between. Everything there went off in fine style, too. Natalie and spouse stayed at the Royal-Orleans which, as I understand it, is quite as fine an haterlery as one is likely to find. Natalie couldn't eat some of the food for, as I realized for the first time she has to avoid lots of things to avoid immediate illness, things such as bananas, bell peppers and so on. It seems her daughter is subject to violent food reactions, too, but not the same ones that trouble her mama. I laughed to myself when I learned that one thing the daughter must avoid is anything with food coloring in it, desserts and so on, including "ice cream" and I laughed at the thought of that when I had to admit such ingredients obviously can't have



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a similar effect on me in view of all the gallons of the stuff I have been drinking during the past season. It seems the daughter is currently having severe headaches and the lady doctor is beginning to believe these are brought on by some of the insecticides, used with such abandon in so many agricultural regions. After considerable observation, it seemed that the patient frequently was afflicted whenever cotton spraying began and the daughter's new house is quite near a cotton field. These sprays, however, tend to travel for miles between planes even close to the cotton patch itself, the stuff itself being so easily tossed about by seemingly almost non-existent air currents.

The Thursday Natchitoches Times was not received at this bend of the river today but will probably be along in a day or two and I shall send it along. It seems there are a couple of Pilgrimage pictures in it including one of Lestan, taken last Thursday. The thing of interest, however, is a letter on page 3 - A, I believe. It is from C. Briarwood Dorman, addressed to the Editor and denouncing Natchitoches for having removed the statue of Uncle Jack. I am glad to see Carrie feels up to denouncing the world, leading one to assume she is definitely on the up and up.

While I think of it, I should report that the grapevine regarding the tour photographs, states that somebody in writing the out-line for the picture in which Lestan figures, referred to Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Henry as "owners of Melrose" or some such phrase. That will bring forth volcanic explosions from a couple other members of the estate, even as it did years ago when Mrs. Henry was referred to as "mistress of Melrose".

Tonight Yuoda is reeling with the aroma of furniture polish, all of the chests, armoires, four posters and whatnot having had a thorough going over today. I am leaving all doors and windows open in spite of the slight chill obtaining and when folding up, I shall simply pull the "kivvers" over my head and play I am not here.

I had forgotten about Pat Baldrige until her letter arrived today. I believe she is a friend of the S. G. Henrys of Baton Rouge or possible of Mrs. H. Payne Breazeale or possibly both. And so turneth the day and so turneth I toward the "kivvers".....

15756

Friday, October 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with never a ray of sunshine from on high but the temperature remained around 70 which made things comfortable enough when diligently employed. The prediction is for continued cloudy weather with nothing having been said about rain for the weekend. So be it.

I needed one lift for the day which I received in the form of the Giotto fragment of the Shepherd Boy. I found it so characteristically sweet of little Miss Lee to think about Lestan and to get off a message from the Metropolitan so it would be received at just the time he needed a lift the most in these busy times before the Pilgrims begin arriving.

I thought I was sleepy last night when I folded up my beard but somehow I couldn't go to sleep. I was so cold. I figured I might be taking the sniffles and so I be-stirred myself after a couple of hours of turning and twisting, went out on the gallery and closed the casement windows and the doors. Then I swallowed an aspirin tablet and left it to it and to the heavy scent of furniture do the rest. On awakening this morning, I never felt better. In case of a cold, other cures failing, try furniture polish on my recommendation. Smile.

Except for the reading of the lovely card, I haven't investigated any of the other mail, what with too many other things to claim my attention. There was a large thin cardboard suit box, put in the post by I. S. Willard without any wrapping save for a thread-like string around it, I assume. It didn't require the Republican elephant to sit on the thing while en route from town here to knock it silly. As one end of the box was gone completely and not string left at all, what the thing may have contained when put in the mails, I wouldn't know. There does seem to be a large envelope which may possibly contain prints or some such, but I made no effort to explore that item under the pressure obtaining and how I might communicate with I. S. W. is anybody's guess as between now and the turn of the year.



15757

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I made three big bouquets for the big house, --two for the fireplaces and one for the front gallery, all contrived from branches of grandiflora magnolia branches, heavily festooned with the big burs or cones supporting gobs of bright red seeds. They look quite festive. I shall do something about bouquets of butterfly lilies tomorrow morning and stir up a fine big center piece of plantation grown fruits and vegetables for the dining room table, --three or four different shades and sizes of persimmons, quinces, three or four different types of peppers, such as dark green, scarlet, cream, etc., with eggplants imperial purple baby bananas in clusters and so on and so forth. I have already made quite an elegant bouquet of long stalks of red okra, touched up with a few stems of green okra, rising from the tall white vase, gift of little Miss Lee. It occupies the vantage point in the corner of my boudoir, resting on a flat burnished copper tray atop the big old iron safe occupying the corner to the right of the fireplace and so, of course, to the right of the Jules Lion portrait of Father and Son. It's really quite spiffy and the white of the vase evokes just the right contrast of the iron safe and copper tray and the dark red of the stalks of okra.

I used the grandiflora branches with cones to grace the chapel and I shall distribute a couple of trays here and there of all fruits in the living room and pumpkins in the African House and Ghana and that will be it, so far as the Charles Lebrun influence may be felt.

The Ghana Garden looks a little seedy, what with the major portions of the vegetables looking a little faded. But the fresh new turnips and mustard make pretty green rows while the random scattering of cress in brilliant splashes here and there, the candleabra yellows and greens and a few other touches, not forgetting the newly painted white benches at the termination of the paths between the parterres pick up a little sprightliness that is pretty enough.

This evening about 4:30 some plantation or other had airplanes defoliating cotton. The stuff covers the country side, smelling vaguely like faint pelecot. I am holding the thought that tincture may evaporate during the night.

And so we head into Pilgrimage, a little tired of a weariness that a night's sleep will correct. I hope the weekend in Lyme is equally promising in seasonal color and a lot less hurly-burly in the people to be received. And so to feed and to bed.....

15758

15758

Sunday, October 13th, 1968.

# Memorandum:

After so many days of dubious weather, Saturday and Sunday turned out to be just perfect, the sky all blue, the thermometer ranging between 70 and 90 and a breeze that was gentle but adequate to temper the warmth.

Up before daylight on Saturday morning, I rounded up vegetable & fruit for the dining room table piece, --the white baby's breath (bath) and the whole thing turned out pretty enough, crowned with a stalk of baby bananas, about the size of kitchen matches which introduced a somewhat sly note of humor and beauty and everybody seemed to find it "darling".

The butterfly lily bouquet for the piecrust table in the same room fell into proper shape and exuded perfume which you know so well.

Clementine Hunter arrived to assume her post in the African House at 11:45 although the afternoon tour did not begin, according to schedule until 1:30. Miss Hunter always inclines to rush the Pilgrimage seas.

My hostesses at Yucca, the African House and Ghana were just perfect. I don't know how many there were, perhaps 20.

Tamita B. did not wear a costume but her little daughter did & enjoyed her two full afternoons. She and I had our pictures taken together by several different photographers. I must see if I can't track one down.

The attendance and the quality of those attending was better than ever. At the big house, the hostesses there must have told everybody look at the fruit-vegetable arrangement. The reason I assume this was so is based on the fact that soads of people congratulated me on it which seems the more remarkable since all of them must have spent at least an hour or more between the big house and Yucca, visiting the gardens, the African House and Ghana. The two or three plants attracting most attention were the red okra in the Metropolitan vase, the butterfly lilies in front of Yucca and the black-eyed-susans vine growing along the "spite fence" on the way to Ghana. Lucille Hendricks, dean of women at northwestern, came rushing up to me to say that she had just returned from the Ghana garden and was bound to say it was the m.....



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beautiful color and design she ever saw. Dr. Hendricks had brought a batch of chicken sandwiches when she arrived and I shall write her tonight to thank her for all services rendered. --she received Sunday in the boudoir and I shall call that after sampling her fine fare, I find the sandwiches fairer by far than the appearance of Ghana.

Tonight, as soon as the final hostess and pilgrim departed, I immediately jumped into my bath and on exchanging street garb for plantation togs, I responded to a knock on the door. It seems Natalie and her husband had agreed to meet here, --both having been busy in town during the afternoon, both intent of whisking me away to the Ile Brevelle Church for gumbo and meat pies. Both Thelma and John had come late in the tour with the same intention and finally, across the fence, all five of us met but I declined both sets of invitations since I had things I wanted to do, little chores and odds and ends and a measure of quiet for this little chat and some thank you letters.

From time to time in the days ahead, I shall be recalling little episodes of the weekend which I shall pass along. All afternoon, both yesterday and today, I would occasionally cast a glance skyward, thinking of the Giotto shepherd boy and the wish from little Miss Lee that had come to hand on Friday, hoping the weekend would be pleasant, as, indeed, her wish had made it.

I don't know how many people attended the Pilgrimage. There were hundreds and hundreds both days. So many people brought the column about Meat Pie Time, asking me to autograph same. Quite a few also requested autographs for the few remaining discs which were snapped up on Saturday afternoon almost before the tour got started.

The only sour note in Saturday's proceedings were the presence of several buses of school children, aged about 12 or 14. Each bus a teacher with its batch of youthful pilgrims and the teachers not only did not exercise any control over the students but, on the contrary, seemed to take the part of the bad manners of the youthful offenders who were both rude and roudy. We shall not encourage or indeed permit any more groups of children en masse. I believe all of the schoolchildren came from Shreveport although buses of grownups were plentiful from New Orleans, Monroe, Houston, Dallas and so on, and everyone seemed to have a lovely time and I enjoyed all of them.

And now before I fall asleep in my chair, I must knock off a few notes and then call it a day. Again my thanks for the card of good wishes which brought so much delight to me and guaranteed perfect Pilgrimage.....

15760

Monday, October 14th, 1968.

Memorah dum:

Perfect weather, today being a carbon copy of the weekend. But nicer than the weather was the mail and especially the letter from Lyme as of Friday last past.

I am so appreciative of all the interesting things related and I am especially touched by little Miss Lee's iry about having columns reproduced in another medium. How exactly like her that she should think of it and somehow in doing so, act as though one were doing a favor to accept such labors and all that these labor involve.

In response I would first of all hasten to express my appreciation and then in the same breath point out that some of them worth such an out-lay. But is on occasion when an interesting one comes along, it really would be grand to know that the trick could be turned, especially as in cases wherein one attempts to gather together certain ones that might seem to lend themselves to gathering them for one type or a volume or another. Before I forget to mention it, only last evening when Natalie passed this way, she remarked she had been thinking about Lyle's "Friends of Joe Gilmore" and wondering if some of Lest n's thing might not be gathered together in the feathered and furred friends especially and perhaps some flowered ones, too, under some such parallel title as Plantation Friends of Lestan. I believe she suggested simply the word, "Plantation" seems to me might be worthy of consideration since that adjective locates the setting a little more and, coming as it would, the first name in the title, it might find its way more readily to searchers for book titles about the country. Until today's letter came to hand, I had never before thought of the possible convenience be in gathering together different subjects through the medium of presentation as touched upon in the letter. May I invite you to join me in adjusting thinking caps and accordingly mull over this matter a bit.

I am so glad you mentioned the matter of the astro's adventures and more especially the name of one of them in particular. It goes without saying I have been thinking along



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lines of names ever since I first heard one identical with another I know, wondering the while what the searchers in family trees might cover if once they set their minds to it. You will, of course, let me hear more on this topic whenever additional light is thrown upon it.

What with one thing and another, I did not get around to examine the enclosures accompanying the letter and thus I am experiencing the pleasure of looking forward to the morrow and a re-reading of the letter itself and a scanning of the printed material.

I can well imagine how impressive it must be in having the neighborhood generally in the wake of receiving the dispossession notice. How nice it must be for the girl friend, temporarily by-sitting, to be able to communicate with home base or the nearest thing to so readily. I can well imagine how wonderful must be the calm, too, when a Columbus natal Day rolls round and the turmoil of the town paving projects slow down for a day at least.

I thought it quite remarkable that little Miss Lee should have caught up so unexpectedly with La Nelson. How she does get about. I was thinking one day last week that she would have done well to respond to my last letter to her a little earlier than she did since I have subse uently disposed of one item she had mentioned but to which she did not respond when I asked her for an immediate answer. But if one is as busy getting about as she obviously is, taking care of correspondence or attempts at correspondence must have drawbacks.

I continue today or more precisely tonight in playing the weekend role of "torn down piece" for there has been lots to claim my attention. August had promised me, in fact, to hadn't promised but volunteered to put in an appearance Sunday evening to lend me a hand at a few post-Pilgrimage chores but I suppose he had to take his children to the Church fair across the way or perhaps he was simply too high to think about anything but August. Early this morning at the store, it was said he was high as a kite and I never did see him so that what work got done to be done, if done at all, by Leston. And even as August failed to put in an appearance, so Doreatha was absent, too. She called me on the phone about 6 o'clock this morning to say she was going to Shreveport for a check-up. Accordingly the clerk and I stirred upon breakfast and then, as J. H. was to be in Baton Rouge all day, we so the clerk and I dined alone across the fence with the lady yonder. To-night I supped alone at Yucca, thinking of little Miss Lee and experiencing a parallel sense of satisfaction in the comparative quiet obtaining around and about.

With the weather so marvelous and such a beautiful letter to hand, I must say my day has been bubbling over with delight and I have a feeling Dreamland when I read it a couple of hours hence, will prove equally entrancing.....

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Tuesday, October 15th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Another beautiful day in the 7990 range.

I did not get around to mention it in yesterday's memo how pleasant was the coincidence that on Friday little Miss Lee had referred to the senior Senator from Illinois, William McKinley Dirksen, -- the letter that came to hand in Monday's post with Sunday's Pilgrimage sandwiched in between when Thelma and John had mentioned what a gay time they had had a week ago in Illinois with the self same Senator at some gathering they attended while up there. Both Dirksen and Ellender have been so long in the Senate together, they know each other well and since the Kysers are old acquaintances of Ellen the Illinois meeting was on a somewhat personal basis, especially as Thelma had something to tell Wm. McK. D. something that seemed to please him considerably. They said the Senator in spite of dark, --possibly liver spots showing on his face remains gay of heart and they all had such a pleasant evening together.

I was happy to find Doreatha back on the job this morning but sorry to hear she will have to be in Shreveport again tomorrow to have some tests run. If anything has to be done following the tests, she has the excellent sense to jump right into it. This she has done once before and accordingly came back so much more quickly than would have been the case if, as so many of her friends, have let it go.

August put in an appearance this morning after two or three days of a battle with the bottle. There was much to be done and we did quite a lot as between 6 and 11 am, and he went on and did some more until I joined him around 2:30 to carry forward some garden projects. This morning I got most of Yucca back into pre-Pilgrimage order. Luck was with us in that we had just about completed household efforts at the moment James put in an appearance, bringing a bucket of ice cream, still unopened in the ice box where I intend looking into the matter a little later.

Dr. Warren Meadows of L. S. U. was here for dinner.



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Wednesday, October 16th, 1968.

He and James, the clerk and I made a merry party and as we all like fresh things from the vegetable section, we all ate mightily, especially on the casserole eggplants, mustard greens, turnips and pumpkin from the vines although, to think of it, the young new turnips were not precisely from the vines but nevertheless fresh. Dr. Meadows was en route to Shreveport to see about the exhibit the L. S. U. Department of Research will sponsor during the impending State Fair which begins this coming Friday or Saturday, I believe.

In yesterday's post was a letter from Roark Byrnes regarding the dinner being held in Jackson, Miss., some time soon. It was merely a form thing, asking if reservation might be made for me attending the annual dinner. It had gone forward under the signature of its President, Roark, who must have served in that capacity about as long as almost anyone has for such an organization. Quite by chance, there were names of several important Mississippi people together with their addresses, printed on the station and James said he would find them handy for some reason or other, possibly concerning the book. I left it to him to present any news regarding the Prince book but as he did not volunteer any, I did not go into it.

There was some correspondence, -- incoming, -- from some gentleman living some place in Holland, probably about gourds but I am not sure as I did not get around to go into it although it does seem to me I have heard something about the matter from the Gourd Society. I was in the midst of a column when a secretary finally showed up this evening and as I did not want to remove the manuscript from the machine, I put off things that would call for the writing of unfamiliar addresses.

Carmen called today to read me an editorial in today's Shreveport paper about the removal of Uncle Jack. She said she would mail it to me shortly and I shall, of course, mail it along. I was glad to see the editorial was sympathetic toward retention of such a monument which, appearing in the Times, seemed so different from their usual position.

And now I shall investigate the ice cream situation and then call it a day. I hope this lovely weather may be holding in Lyme, too.....

15764

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Wednesday, October 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Ideal weather continues.

To everybody's surprise, Doreatha was back from the day at the hospital in Shreveport in time to give supper. She remains here until Tuesday when she returns to the hospital for some minor breast operation, according to her Charity Hospital physician.

At the coffee hour, Father Fredericks joined us for a little chat about the Church fair. He said they did better than ever before. He also said that according to recent examination of certain old documents, Augustin Meyer gave a little over one acre as a site for the establishment of the Ile Brevelle church instead of the 40 acres as everyone had always been given to understand.

I was very glad to learn about this in order to set the local records straight. He was somewhat hazy about how additional acreage was added, saying that some religious order, -- he thought it Sisters of Mercy or some such, acquired several acres adjoining the church a little later but he was unable to say if this had anything to do with the Drexels of Philadelphia, although I am under the impression that came much later. Further acreage was added around 1885, bringing the present tract up to a fraction over 101 acres in all.

I assume all this came to light in view of the rumpus that went on a year or so ago when Bishop Greco and the local parishioners went into orbit about which Church group owned which parts of the tract. I am so sorry that Father Calahan's book about the Church seems to be all off the track so far as ownership is concerned and possibly the amount of property that was acquired from the time of Grandpere Augustin down to the present. It would seem that in the past the local guardians of Church property have been so cagey about revealing ownership and acquisitions that nobody has been able to make head or tail out of the abstracts, if any ever existed and I assume it may be a while before there is any



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verification of Father Frederick's present understanding but in the mean time, I am glad to hear about this new understanding on the part of those in authority.

I was surprised this afternoon as I had been in the morning, not by any news but simply because James put in an appearance, bearing with him the radio I had sent by him to town yesterday to have fixed and delivered to the clerk's home in town so he might bring it down. Two visits from James in two days was certainly unexpected. He mentioned the book and said it is scheduled to be out by the end of the month but he will believe that when he sees it although he has been getting some advertising figures from radio and press to be used when it does appear. I made the most of the opportunity of his presence here to send some quinces to Ruth Crabtree who once mentioned something about making jelly.

Mrs. Chopin called this evening to say a friend of hers had mentioned a college associate had reported having heard from Mrs. Walker. The latter had mentioned that they liked Florida and that she liked the college but as they do not live in town, her mother found the days long with no one to chat with. She said that utility rates in their neighborhood are outrageously high. Possibly the bills will go down shortly if hurricane Gladys, now prowling in that area, tears up a few power lines.

I have not heard from Mrs. Walker since sending that magical little tape recorder that baffled everybody who got tangled up with it.

I suppose there will be some letters from last week's pilgrims pretty soon. There was one today, in fact, which I shall enclose, and she about butterfly lilies from Dr. Sarah Clapp of Hatchitchees who got some for planting early last Spring. I shall also enclose the clipping about Natalie you so kindly shared with me.

I seem to be hungry and think I shall round up a slab of Natalie's cake and a dab of ice cream and call it a day after having done some physical exercising today in beginning work of putting the winter garden in order. And may there be cake and cream conveniently to hand for little Miss Lee.....

15766

Wednesday, October 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cool in the 70's with a promise of a dip into the 50's tonight. The rain we were promised by the weather man failed to come through and now it seems to have gone away. I assume the Gladys hurricane will not reach into this area and I hope it plays out before going much further.

Carmen called me this morning to read me what the Hatchitchees Paper had to say about the Pilgrimage. It started off bravely enough but suddenly petered out. I do not recall that Oakland was even mentioned. A passing remark about mint drinks at Beaufort was only a sentence. There was some talk about town but not much although the Breville Church fair and Melrose was mentioned, with references to Yucca, its gourds and so on and a flock of names of Ghana and African House hostesses but no mention of hostesses at the big house or Yucca and I believe there was some passing reference to Lestan. There must be a hundred sorrowing people, -- unmentioned hostesses and such like who probably scanned the paper in vain for a glance at their names.

I asked Carmen how all this omission occurred and she said she had offered to write an account of the doings but Margaret Sutton, President, had said she would take care of it and she certainly distinguished herself by the way she did or didn't do it. My paper, in fact no papers or 1st class mail found their way to this bend of the river. I suppose they will come to morrow and I shall be able to post one to Lyme on Saturday.

The surprise news of the day was the announcement of the impending marriage of the former Mrs. John F. Kennedy. Somehow I had not expected a second marriage for the one time First Lady. It seems I was mistaken. The initial reaction to the news seemed to be received unfavorably as though the public did not want her to change her status as widow. Possibly, come to think of it, it more resembles the reaction of the public especially in the old days, when movie audiences somehow took movie stars to their hearts in such a way as to feel they had sustained a loss when one of their heroes or heroines selected a spouse. My guess is that for people



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who can remember her while she was mistress of the White House, she will always remain the lady who brought style to the nation's capitol and will always be honored in the future, even as was Dolly Madison, as a vibrant personality who lent grace to the post held by her husband and the nation over which they presided.

Kay called me today to invite me to dine with them next Thursday. She said she hasn't started getting about any as yet but expects to do so shortly and she would like to have me as her first guest following her recuperation. I suppose I may go, although I promised to let her know within a day or two. Going to town for luncheon is one thing but breaking bread late over a prolonged dinner of a couple of hours and chit-chat afterwards that knocks out an entire afternoon which is alright for town's people with nothing pressing on hand but turns out to be a little wearing if one has a couple of things to attend to along the way, such as shopping and doing some chores when one gets back.

While it occurs to me, I am bound to mention one especially delightful 10 or 15 minutes last Sunday afternoon during Pilgrimage when two pert ladies approached me to say how much they had enjoyed the tour and to express the guess I could never imagine their identity. I couldn't, of course and they laughed with glee as they remarked I certainly wasn't up to snuff on costuming. They said they were the superior nuns from the school in town. They were attired in garments of the latest wrinkle for contemporary daughters of the Church. I felt they were mighty happy to be in their new raiment and I asked them to display their new head pieces, the cut of their skirts and its illustration as to the fashionable heights that modern girls are affecting in their skirts and so on. They seemed to relish every minute of the performance and I roped in a few passing pilgrims to observe this official Yucca showing of the season. I certainly rejoice for all the girls who have been liberated from those tacky old costumes that seem never to have changed for so many hundreds of years. It seemed to me that they, too, seemed mighty tickled about their momentary role of models and before they said Goodbye, they insisted I come to town one day to see how fine their new school is and how fetching they appear in their new quarters in their new costumes. In the course of a year, plenty of priests and nuns pass this way but never I remember any of them attending a Pilgrimage and perhaps that's a sign in the right direction, leading me to hope that eventually some of the girls may one day go so far as to appear in calico for one or another of the annual festivals.....

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Friday, October 18th, 1968.

Memorandum: Clear and cool in the 50 - 70 bracket but seemingly even a little cooler because of a steady chilly breeze blowing all day out of the North.

I am wondering if it is on the cool side at the former Rand-Register camp where Lloyd Wenk and family and a flock of friends are supposedly spending the weekend. At supper I learned that Lloyd and family had come down early in the afternoon and that their half dozen or more guests were expected sometime during the evening. I did not see any of them but undoubtedly shall be having them for a tour on the morrow.

There seem to be so many topics for the dispensers of news ranging from Far East peace feelers to nuptial preparations off the Greek coast that nothing, with one exception, on either waves during the daylight hours was mentioned about the Florida hurricane. At 6 o'clock this evening there were a couple of sentences about high winds mounting in the Tampa area but that was all. Perhaps I shall encounter some news of later broadcasts tonight. While I know a few people in that area I don't know many except the Beckermans at St. Petersburg across the bay from Tampa and the Walkers at Leesburg which I believe may lie 150 or 200 miles northeast of the Tampa neighborhood. I haven't heard much talk about this particular storm but it seems to me it must be a little late in the season for hurricanes. I guess I base that assumption on the fact that some historian, perhaps Comminger, once remarked that Columbus was lucky in arriving in the West Indies after the middle of October when the say more precisely, around the middle of October when the hurricane season is usually over. Perhaps hurricanes like bird migrations, don't always fall precisely on the dot.

I did not see my coffee companion this morning as she had already departed for Alexandria to spend the day, having departed an hour or so before the 9 o'clock rendezvous time for the demitasses. Betty and Keith Coureger of New Iberian spent the night across the fence, en route home from Monroe but they did not continue.



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on their southward homeward way until after Celeste had left. Keith came over this morning after Celeste had departed and I went over to chat a little with him and his Betty before they took off. They are both very gay and we had a pleasant few minutes together before their departure.

I don't know where I got the idea that Judy Jones, the New Orleans person interested in doing something about an article on the artist, was threatening to honor me with a visit today. Perhaps I mixed up her date to see me with some other person. Be that as it may, she never did put in an appearance.

Everyone I have seen today has been talking about the impending marriage of the widow Kennedy. Seldom does J. H. manifest interest in such matters but I noticed when he dined with us at the big house today that he manifested much and extended interest in the subject and kept returning to it, -- not so much about the marriage but the personalities involved.

Carmen seems to be about the only one I have talked with who disapproved. "I never thought much of her when she was in the White House and I think less of her now," was her handling of the subject, except to say "I think it is perfectly awful". But why she thought it awful, she did not explain. As an Episcopalian, she can't be doing much worrying about the Catholic angle of the matter and so I take it it is merely personal resentment, -- possibly some hidden regret on Carmen's part that she isn't Mrs. Kennedy.

I want to do a little reading tonight from a book that came to hand in today's post, -- "The Emancipation Proclamation" by Franklin. The author of whom I have never heard is a member of the faculty of Brooklyn College. Like so many things of which I have heard, Mr. Lincoln's famous document seems to fall into that category of important things with which everybody is acquainted but few if any know much about. I have always thought it interesting that all the European colonies having outpost in the Western Hemisphere and all the independent Latin American countries south of the United States had done away with slavery a long time before 1860 and that Mexico had abolished slavery, too, well before the United States ever made up her mind to get busy on that problem. I hope I get a chance to read a little over this weekend.

May the weather and all be turning sedately in the Lyme area and the Indian Summer weather continue a while longer as the season rolls along....

15770

Sunday, October 20th, 1968.

Memorandum:

A beautiful weekend, fair over head, dry under foot with a bracing dab of coolness in between as between 40 and 70.

I guess the Lloyd Wenks made it alright at the camp with their guests. They came Friday night, -- I know not how many but I saw only Lloyd and his spouse only once, -- Saturday morning, -- just as I was leaving the coffee cups across the fence about 9:30. Lloyd had spoken to me about giving a tour during the weekend but I never did witness any of that for, as I learned later from the clerk, they had all come for their go-round while we were at dinner. Since the Wenks know we dine at 12 and since they and their guests had little but time on their hands for the weekend, it does seem quaint that they should chance to stage their visitation slap at the noon hour.

Judy Jones appeared about 4 o'clock Saturday afternoon. We had a pleasant hour together, talking about the artist, after which she departed for Shreveport. This noon at dinner J. H. mentioned having seen her at the artist's house with a station wagon piled high with Hunter masterpieces.

While we were just about to move from the main course at dinner and the dessert -- coffee section, there was a knock at the front door. It was Harry and Del Checkley. I must say the hour of 12 was equally odd for dropping in. As they had known J. H. and Celeste for 40 years, and as everybody likes everybody, we had a pleasant hour for chit-chat en masse although I was sorry I had not been a Yucca where, as I discovered later, they had been before coming next door. They had lots of interesting thing to related about their trip "down under". It wasn't so much a sight-seeing trip as a visit to Harry's niece, Rosemary Kimberley. Rosemary has been here in times goneby with Del. Her education as well as her husband's was in England but they lived for a number of years in Kenya where they had property. With the fading of British power in the Dark Continent, the newly forming Government expropriated lands, long held by Europeans, and so the Kimberleys moved to Australia or New Zealand, I am not sure which, for I got a little lost in the details as between Charlie and his brother, one living in Australia, the other in New Zealand. Be that, at grand time was had by all and Del and Harry are going to stay home for a while although they do plan to spend some time



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next summer in Hong-kong after which they will go on to India  
and a flock of places between there and Europe before returning to  
Lake Charles once more.

This morning about 9:30 I experienced an odd mix-up on  
the 'phone. Natalie called to ask if the hour were propitious  
for running through a couple of points on a column  
I had sent her a few days ago. I tried to reach her about the  
matter last night but the Delphin kinds were having protracted  
fun on the party line and never did let go of it as be-  
tween 7 and 10 o'clock when I gave up trying. And  
so we jumped right into the literary tangle but hadn't gone  
far before the Delphins were up and at it again. They are  
saucy youngsters and don't mind asking one to clear the line whenever  
they feel like making use of it. They had been working the  
thing over time earlier in the morning and when they tried to  
knock out our use of it, I told them I had given them  
their share of time without protest last night and that I  
proposed to attend to the present matter to hand before  
relinquishing it. They kept clicking the darned thing, whistling  
into the receiver and all sort of high-jinks but Natalie and  
I could make it out alright although not under the most  
placid of circumstances. Then, in the midst of things, Celeste's  
voice came on, apologizing for the interruption but explaining  
the lady doctor was at her house and needed to make an  
emergency call to the hospital to summon  
an ambulance for some patient in the neighborhood. Naturally  
Natalie and I readily relinquished our priority claim and  
only the lady doctor or Celeste can report on how there con-  
certed efforts made out in bucking the Delphins.

I haven't run into any radio news since 7 o'clock this  
morning. At that hour it was said  
hurricane Gladys had moved north across Florida and was over the  
Atlantic opposite Charleston. I held the thought she may  
continue eastwardly without skirting the coast as far north as Lyme.  
It will be interesting to learn what if any adventures the  
Walkers experienced at Leesburg. As for I. S. Willard,  
she is probably well out of the way if she sailed from  
New York on the 14th or 16th or whenever it was she finally  
made up her mind to depart.

I suppose it will be a couple of weeks before Life carries  
the Kennedy wedding if, indeed, they devote much space to it, what  
with the restrictions clamped down on the news media. There seems  
to be so much for the news boys to work on, what with  
the politicians, the astros, the hurricane, the wedding all all...

15772

Monday, October 21st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and continued cool.

And even nicer than the weather is the letter of Friday  
from Lyme which arrived by today's post.

I am so glad little Miss Lee enjoyed running through the  
memo and the newspaper accounts of the Pilgrimage.

I found it very extraordinary that yesterday morning during  
our conversation that Natalie made exactly the same remark  
that little Miss Lee had made in her Friday note about how the  
horror of the spite fence had been turned into a thing a beauty  
that captivated the delight of so many pilgrims.

I liked everything about the Sunday wedding that little Miss  
Lee spoke. I was interested in a word picture  
of the bride's career as given by Joseph Harsh on NBC tonight.  
Perhaps you heard it. One point he made I thought quite good, to wit,  
that Mrs. Kennedy had, without apparently being especially interested  
in politics, always gone along with the Kennedy in furthering  
their efforts, including all the style she had given  
the Administration at the White House and now that other things  
of especial interest to her could be taken up and pursued in  
full realization that she had done a splendid job in her  
previous and official line of endeavor.

One of the things I wanted to mention that occurred during  
pilgrimage had to do with three or four cartons of Talking  
Books. Lots, --surprising lots, of people attending Pilgrimage  
seem to know that I use talking books. I usually keep three or  
four cartons resting on the bench on the front gallery all the year  
through. I find it hard as a place for them, out from under  
feet as they would be, were they in the house, and yet convenient  
to hand whenever I have need of an unread one. I assume  
Dr. Lucille Hendrick, receiving in the boudoir, may mention  
the fact that I employ Talking Books when waving visitors out  
onto the front gallery where they have a chat with me if they care to.  
Be that as it may, it frequently happens that pilgrims inquire  
about Talking Books and it is a joy for me to return from my



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butterfly lily bosquet in front of the house to point out the aforesaid cartons on the bench. There are always two or three hostesses there, --college girls, I imagine, and we chat a word or two, should there be a moment before the boudoir gives up the next batch of people. In the middle of Saturday afternoon I noticed a couple of hostesses struggling with something at the far west end of the gallery and I stepped over to lend them hand as people were waiting to be received. A rag rug has been placed across the back of the bench to give a d b of color and it turned out the young ladies were struggling to conceal the Talking Book cartons behind the rug, explaining as I approached, that they were trying to hide them from the sight of the pilgrims as they felt sure I wouldn't want anybody to know I couldn't see very well. Smile.

I am putting yesterday's Hatchitoches paper in the mail at the same time this memo goes forward. Wrapped with the paper are a couple of publications that came to hand Saturday. I haven't the slightest idea what they contain but since the paper was going forward I thought I might as well include them. Whether you glance at them or not doesn't make the slightest difference so far as my interest in them is concerned. I believe I. S. Willard put my on some mailing list a while back and I believe these must be the consequence thereof.

In today's post came three or four double spaced pages about Lyle from John Andressen of Montreal. I did not have time to read the manuscript and am sending it to Natalie to go with the data being collected on that subject. I believe John is archivist at McGill and I find it odd that he should be using both the Montreal and the Quebec addresses although perhaps these two places aren't so far apart as my hazy concept of their respective positions appear in my mind.

My secretary was late in arriving tonight and I tried to let him go as soon as possible for his auntie died yesterday and there seems to be a great deal of confusion about making arrangements for the funeral which probably will not be held before the end of the week, what with kin folks coming from the West Coast and other remote places.

There is not the usual jangle on the phone tonight. The Delphin kids are probably having a spat for it was busy-busy until about 8 o'clock, ringing every 2 or 3 minutes, followed by utter siles, somebody having left the receiver off the hook so the other five subscribers on the wire are equally enjoying utter quiet, too. I find it odd that people with lots of money will undergo all the inconveniences of hooking themselves up on a 6 party line. The store, of course, has a private line and so that instrument can always be used by him who has the key.....

15774

Tuesday, October 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Vaguely cloudy of the gguze variety with the thermometer doing the 40 to 70 run.

I began the day by listening to the return to earth of the space ship and found the whole account thrilling. For a quarter of an hour or so when the world lost contact with the rocket after it had plunged into the ocean, I, like everybody else who was listening felt very distressed in fear the darned thing had sunk.

There was one pronunciation by an NBC commentator which made me think of little Miss Lee and what a kick I felt she would be getting out of it if she chanced to be listening to that particular speaker who referred to one of the gentlemen in the rocket as Mr. Eye-zul.

Carmen called me yesterday morning to say that June Larson's family had sustained a death. Her parents made their home in Houston. Her father went to business yesterday morning as usual but died on reaching the office. The office called June's brother who lives in Corpus Christi who immediately called June in New York. Bill, her husband, somehow got her to the airport and en route to Houston within the hour. Her brother planned to meet her in Houston at 2:30 and together they would go to their mother to break the news of her husband's death, his body having been taken directly to a mortician's establishment. It seems odd the mother or wife, that is, should not have been notified immediately. I believe Bill is in a skew and can't get away for long.

Mrs. Aikin or Eakin or however the name is spelled called me yesterday. It was at noon and she merely wanted to chat a little. There was a break in the connection out of Alexandria and the connection could not be re-established. She called me again this noon, saying she had tried to get me last night but without success. I told her that was understandable since the Delphin kids had taken the receiver off the hook. It was still off this morning at 7 o'clock but half an hour later they must have remembered it and put it back.

I guess the primary reason for her call was to ask if Town Talk or any of other papers would object to Heritage publishing something I had written that once had appeared in the column. I said they would not. She said the first issue of the magazine is taking shape and looks promising thus far. She thought it would be out early in December. I hope it surprises everybody and comes out a little ahead of time so



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we might get off a copy to auntie for the holidays, assuming the pictures may be colorful if not exactly Christmasy.

Doreatha left early this morning for the Charity Hospital in Shreveport where she will undergo surgery on the morrow. I can't say whether she or I were the more thunderstruck at supper last night when the merchant-planter remarked that Sister would be making calls on her she was there. I really thought Doreatha was going to drop her tray for all of us had been hoping she could achieve what she was going to have taken care of without any tornado knowing of her presence in that neighborhood.

Today, being Country Club day, the clerk, J. H. and I dined across the fence and the bachelors made out very nicely.

Juanita B. and I established telephonic contact yesterday. One of her neighbors has some guests from Seattle who want to indulge in a tour on Wednesday and Juanita B. will come down with them. And speaking of the Randy Jacks' new home site, I am wondering if it isn't getting a bout time for them to get back to Seattle before long. After "doing" Central America, they had planned to pass this way when finally heading out toward the Northwest country. It would certainly be a co-incidence if they chanced to arrive here at the same time Juanita B.'s Seattle friends put in an appearance.

I guess the season for the butterfly lilies is just about over. They will probably stand still for a few days until the first frost arrives but in the mean time then certainly aren't putting out any new blossoms while the thermometer dips into the 40's.

When I heard this noon that St. Mathew's school was giving the children this afternoon off so the teachers could attend some meeting, I thought I might round up a secretary or two to lend me a hand at getting caught up on mail but I learned in the next breath that pursuit of knowledge was going to be shifted to picking of cotton which didn't harmonize at all with my calculations.

Somebody today mentioned that in last Sunday's town paper, --inside,-- the paper that went forward with Monday's memo, carried some Pilgrimage picture hostesses. I did not open the paper and so did not see any of the likenesses of the ladies and do not need to, having seen them in the flesh but I was sorry there were no pictures of Oakland which did not get mentioned in any of the write-ups either, all of which showed mighty poor management on the part of the paper, it seems to me. Everyone who knows anything about newspaper business agrees that what the local paper needs more than anything else is not more advertisements one good editor.....

15776

Wednesday, October 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and cool. Ten bit hot

It was so nice to find the letter from Lymie in today's post. It is so wonderful to have such a complete account of the nuptials and only little Miss Lee would have thought of filling in so many blank spaces that either the radio had omitted or I had failed to find in the ether. I was not had an opportunity as yet to finish the entire coverage as contained in the clippings but I am well on my way and find myself impatient to get on with the business. Their arrival seems so timely by arriving today, what with all the other Kennedy news on today's radio programs including a reference at 5 o'clock this morning, -- the only one dealing with the subject about the sale for one million dollars of the Robert Kennedy manuscript on politics and the other topic about Cardinal Cushing taking up verbal arms in behalf of the newly wed, Jackie, and her status as regards the Church. It seems as though the Kennedy pot continues boiling merrily right along.

I hammered away rather late on this machine last night and, after folding up my beard, discovered my mind was too active to let me sleep take over readily and accordingly I got caught up somewhat on broadcasts from far western stations that provided me with bits of news I had not rounded up during the customary hours. I am going to try hitting the hay a little earlier tonight for I have quite a few things on my calendar for the morrow including jaunt to town which, in itself, takes up a lot of time I should prefer to devote to other things.

My coffee companion this morning spoke of restlessness on the part of the merchant-planter last night and how he fails to sleep with any regularity and how he runs over in his mind about possible trips to Mayo's, Oschners etc., to see if they can discover why he doesn't feel better although all the while during waking hours, he refuses to take things easier and little rest periods that to everyone else seems so important. There seems to be a remarkable parallel between his refusal to attend to such matters and the self same way his mama balked at all such suggestions while constantly wondering why she didn't have more pep.



15777

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Juanita B., Pat and four friends came down for a tour this afternoon, Juanita B. bringing me a fine pound cake she had baked with her own hands and it is marvelous, as I discovered immediately after they had gone and shall confirm to my own satisfaction again before flattening out tonight.

Pat did not appear when they all arrived, he having remained at the store for half an hour or so. Eventually, however, he caught up with us by the time we had visited the big house, the peace and Chan. He remained with us during the African House tour and certainly seemed to enjoy himself rather more than most restless people appear able to do. I am glad he imposed the few minutes of pilgrimage on himself for I think he enjoyed what he saw and heard and, even as his uncle, the merchant-planter, such "slow-downs" would certainly be good for him he could manage to succumb to them occasionally.

I learned this noon of the death of a sister of our former prize carpenter, Will Rogers. Her name was Clemente or Clement. It was only a few months ago that her brother, Will died of the same malady, --cancer. Clemente was the daughter of Archillius Browns secondwife, la Cheney by a former husband. And about the time Archillius Brown was marrying la Cheney, his son, BilyBrown, was marrying la Cheney's daughter, Clemente. If this doesn't make any sense, just charge it off to trash. I remark upon the matter, however, simply because I do not know of many instances in which the children of respective first marriages end up by marrying each other's step-daughter and daughter-in-law of her husbands papa.

Clemente in recent years has been a compulsive eater, never going out of the house so far as her next door neighbors' unless armed with a sack of bread and a bottle of water. Averaging height, she attained some prodigious tonnage, --something over 300 pounds and then somewhat gradually and then very swiftly, fell away to a mere skeleton.

Carmen called me today to relate some of her Red Cross problems which seem to be unusually numerous at the present time and wonderfully complicated. One of her clients is the Delphins, the same family that shares the local party line. There is a youth in the Delphin family in service at some camp on the West Coast. Time goes apparently mean nothing in his young life for he is frequently around anywhere from 2 to 4 o'clock in the morning which helps none of the customers on the party line get too sound sleep. And so things turn and I must turn to a slab of pound cake and then fold.....

15778

15778

Thursday, October 24th, 1968.

Memorandum:

We had an unexpected shower before midnight, the skies clearing before dawn by a chilly breeze out of the North and persisted all day. It is clear tonight and we are promised a thermometer sag down into the upper 30's before morning -- a reading not calculated to benefit butterfly lilies.

In today's post there was a letter from a Miss White of Leesville. I am passing it along to the Hysterical Ladies for their records. The lady explained she and a companion had made the tour, looking forward to seeing Hunter murals and hoping to contact the artist. Having proceeded as far as the big house and encountering there some youthful students who were said to have arrived by bus, they found the hubbub such as to make it impossible for them to proceed further. The reason for the letter being addressed to me was based on the fact that they hoped I could advise them how they might contact the artist and if it might be possible if such an arrangement might be made, there might be a time when they would find Melrose open to visitors so that they might complete the tour at some future date whenever it might be possible to see the artist while in this area. Everybody among the Hysterical group with whom I have talked are dead set against any more bus loads of high school students but I figure this letter might well be added to the verbal evidence already to hand against such customers.

And while on the subject of educational high-jinks, I would mention that it has long been the custom at this time of year, -- during the State Fair at Shreveport, for the football teams of Northwestern and Louisiana Tech., I believe it is, to stage their big game for the delectation of the crowds. This year, it was announced, would be the last such contest. I chanced to ask why this was to be the break in the old custom and learned the reason was because the college students attending the game, usually took reservation at Shreveport hotels or motels and that in recent years these visitors had torn up and destroyed so much property in the several caravansaries that the operators of these places simply would not accommodate any more college students which is certainly a fine commentary on the behavior of young college students, I should say.

If I can find it, I shall enclose a letter from I. S. Willard that



15779

arrived by today's mail, posted from Lisbon, I believe.  
I doubt if it contains anything of interest and if time presses,  
you may skip glancing through it in full assurance you will have  
missed nothing of importance.

I journeyed to town, arriving a little before noon and found  
the Registers awaiting my arrival at 406 Williams where we had a  
pleasant chat over some excellent wine, after which we drove down  
to 209 South Williams where Ruth Crabtree had prepared  
a delicious luncheon, beautifully served in lavish portions. The  
things I liked best were fried oysters, prepared with such a  
lightness of touch as to suggest they might almost float off into  
space if one didn't watch out. And there was some kind of  
a rice thing, the base being the fluffies of rice over which had been  
spread just at serving time some kind of a piping hot cheese blanket that  
was wonderful. There was an incredible salad, beautifully arranged on  
individual plates just a little smaller than the dinner plates, --  
a variety of neatly chopped green vegetables, heavily impregnated with  
a marvelous sauce w the ingredients of which I couldn't  
determine. In the dessert section, there was some kind of a chilled  
custard about the color of persimmons and wonderfully subtle as to  
flavor that fitted in just perfectly with the home made waffer cookies  
and a heavily brewed coffee that helped bring one back to life.

After sitting long at the table, we took a turn in  
the garden of 209 where we observed some of the un-  
usual shrubs and talked with the colored gardener who has been  
on the place for years and years. James went to see about something  
and Kay and I continued our "constitutional" a while longer. She  
took the opportunity to ask me if I would come up for a party  
she was giving for some Rumanian princess she is entertaining a week  
hence. I declined but suggested she bring the lady down here  
for which she seemed happy to accept. I think  
the princess is a bag. I believe there was something about her in today's  
paper. She is to speak at Northwestern around November 1st and  
expects to be Kay's guest for about a week. I believe she  
is mixed-up with at least flirting with that crack-pot  
bunch of ultra rightpeople like H. L. Hunt,  
Billy James Harjis and such-like. By inviting Kay to bring her house  
guest here, I can bounce them a cup of tea and send them on  
their way, thereby providing a gesture in Kay's behalf  
while at the same time enabling myself to avoid a tiresome  
evening abroad with a flock of people whose  
political and economic views don't jibe with mine a bit.

I had a few of shopping to do, hinges, wash clothes, door-jams and  
what not and forgot half the things I had intended buying. Kay and  
James brought me home about 4 o'clock where I found some mulatto  
pilgrims from Washington awaiting my coming and that was a bout it.  
Unaccustomed as I am to chasing up and down the big road and because  
the night chill makes me sleepy, I intended folding up my beard forthwith....

15780

Friday, October 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair in the 40 - 70 bracket.

Boston's Cardinal Cushing seemed to be the center  
of the news stories on this evening's radio offerings, the  
Cardinal threatening to step down on the first of the year over  
abuse he has received for having remained the steady fast  
friend to the former First Lady. Like everybody else,  
I was rather shocked that the Cardinal should have re-acted so s-  
ly. As a matter of fact, I had always supposed that "once  
a Cardinal, always a Cardinal". Let us hope it turns out  
that way when the New Year rolls 'round.

Carmen called me this morning to read what Time has  
to say about the wedding of last Sunday. If you  
chanced upon the piece, you will have noticed it is rather  
long as Time articles go or so it seemed to me. I  
found it brilliantly executed and full of information,  
especially about the career of the groom. On last night's  
news mention was made of a gift of the groom to the  
bride in a set of rubies, three all told, --two ear-  
rings and a third in a ring, all three of the handsome  
stones being encircled in diamonds and valued at  
a million two hundred thousand dollars.

Carmen read the Time article rather fast and a couple of time  
when the Delphin children got to fiddling with the 'phone, I  
missed an occasional phrase. Unless I am mistaken, how-  
ever, there was a statement that seemed to have a familiar  
echo. That was the remark that when the former First Lady was as  
if she were given a choice to select a century other than the pre-  
one in which to live and she replied it would be  
the 18th.

As has happened before, I had a 'phone call from the  
Heritage today for which I couldn't find much reason for  
the call having been put through. But by dint of some  
questioning on my part, I learned that the article about  
the Melrose gardens would not appear in this autumn's first  
issue but would come out in the Spring issue in  
April. I believe Hodges Gardens will appear in the autumn issue..  
made the most of the opportunity to inquire about the set of 100  
slides which I insisted upon having in time



15781

to put in the stocking of a friend by Christmas at the latest. I was assured the item would be to hand in ample time. I have received that assurance from the same source before but I shall continue holding the thought the present promise is a more trustworthy.

Letters from pilgrims continue arriving from people unknown and towns never heard of. As I haven't had very proficient secretaries and as I have a game thumb, I am letting them slide for a few days until the quality of secret assistance and easier manipulation of the typewriter enable me to knock off notes with more speed and gusto. I cut my on a razor blade and, not satisfied with that, I proceeded to bang the cut place with a hammer which seemed to me quite a fine example of adding insult to injury for anyone having dreams of being his own "parfait secretaire." And thus my unknown correspondents can bide their time a bit and I shall probably get this machine to humming again within another day or so.

Yesterday while taking in the turn with Kay in the garden at South Williams, she had quite a long and involved story she had to tell me which sounded like something stirred up by some of the super-duper ultra conservatives with whom she has come into contact through Sudie. According to the tale, some secret papers belonging to George Washington had to do with a vision he experienced while in winter quarters during the Revolution. The form of a beautiful maiden appeared to him on several occasions. Her identity wasn't made clear but from the description it seemed she might have been a single person in composite form made by the Goddess of Liberty and the Virgin Marie. She pointed to a dark cloud of disaster that was going to sweep the country but somehow that cloud was banished. A second dark cloud appeared and that would be the Civil War to which was eventually done away with, only to be followed by a third which was recognized as Communism and that is the cloud all right thinking people must unite against to prove that the Washington vision might be correct. My informant explained she could tell the story to most people as the majority of them wouldn't believe it. I could comprehend that point readily enough but still remained puzzled that she could become so wrought up over such tom foolery. I am certainly glad I declined the party she is giving for the princess next Thursday, of that I am quite sure.

And so begineth the weekend. Myradio reported rain today in Lyme. I hope it may be clearing before the morrow so the we may be just as little Miss Lee would have it....

15782

Sunday, October 27th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool.

Saturday was quiet and today started off brightly enough in spite of the re-adjustment of the clock which puzzled me a little. On Saturday night I took a cat nap while waiting for the news, awakening just as the news cast began. Among other things the announcer had to say was a reminder that we all should set out time pieces before calling it a day. Not too wide awake, in reached out toward the night table, picked up the clock and turned the hands of the thing around. This morning I went through my accustomed paces, giving no thought at all about the time until Natalie called. As I picked up the receiver, I glanced at the clock and something told me there was something out of line with the hour it registered. I asked Natalie if she had a clock before her. She said she did and gave me the magical hour which turned out to be two and a half hours different from what mine indicated. The moral to this story is: try to keep awake long enough to set your clock properly at Day Light Saving season.

Our conversation was interrupted a couple of times by her husband. At Pilgrimage time, Natalie had asked me if I was in the market for a white cat. I was. This morning when Natalie had started to call me, her husband had set about trying to catch the cat, saying that if successful he and she might deliver the cat to me during the afternoon. One interruption was the husband's announcement that he had succeeded in capturing the animal. The second interruption was in the nature of a subsequent news flash, --the cat had escaped.

There wasn't much news other than college doings. She did mention that Kay had invited her to a reception at 209 South Williams for next Thursday afternoon. She had accepted the invitation and only now did she remember that some time back, she had made an appointment some time back for a check-up at an Alexandria hospital for Thursday and so she was writing Kay to decline the invitation.

Mildred McCoy 'phoned me today, explaining she would keep me only



15781

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Yesterday while taking in the turn with Kay in the garden at South Williams, she had quite a long and involved story she had to tell me which sounded like something stirred up by some of the super-duper ultra conservative with whom she has come into contact through Sudie. According to the tale, some secret papers belonging to George Washington had to do with a vision he experienced while in winter quarters during the Revolution. The form of a beautiful maiden appeared to him on several occasions. Her identity wasn't made clear but from the description it seemed she might have been a single person in composite form made by the Goddess of Liberty and the Virgin Marie. She pointed to a dark cloud of disaster that was going to sweep the country but somehow that cloud was banished. A second dark cloud appeared and that would be the Civil War to which was eventually done away with, only to be followed by a third which was recognized as Communism and that is the cloud all right thinking people must unite against to prove that the Washington vision might be correct. My informant explained she could tell the story to most people as the majority of them wouldn't believe it. I could comprehend that point readily enough but still remained puzzled that she could become so wrought up over such tomfoolery. I am certainly glad I declined the party she is giving for the princess next Thursday, of that I am quite sure.

And so begineth the weekend. My radio reported rain today in Lyme. I hope it may be clearing before the morrow so the weekend may be just as little Miss Lee would have it....

15782

Sunday, October 27th, 1968.

Memorandum:  
Fair and cool.

Saturday was quiet and today started off brightly enough in spite of the re-adjustment of the clock which puzzled me a little. On Saturday night I took a cat nap while waiting for the news, awakening just as the news cast began. Among other things the announcer had to say was a reminder that we all should set our time pieces before calling it a day. Not too wide awake, in rechecked out toward the night table, picked up the clock and turned the hands of the thing around. This morning I went through my accustomed paces, giving no thought at all about the time until Natalie called. As I picked up the receiver, I glanced at the clock and something told me there was something out of line with the hour it registered. I asked Natalie if she had a clock before her. She said she did and gave me the magical hour which turned out to be two and a half hours different from what mine indicated. The moral to this story is: try to keep awake long enough to set your clock properly at Day Light Saving season.

Our conversation was interrupted a couple of times by her husband. At Pilgrimage time, Natalie had asked me if I was in the market for a white cat. I was. This morning when Natalie had started to call me, her husband had set about trying to catch the cat, saying that if successful he and she might deliver the cat to me during the afternoon. One interruption was the husband's announcement that he had succeeded in capturing the animal. The second interruption was in the nature of a subsequent news flash, --the cat had escaped.

There wasn't much news other than college doings. She did mention that Kay had invited her to a reception at 209 South Williams for next Thursday afternoon. She had accepted the invitation and only now did she remember that some time back, she had made an appointment some time back for a check-up at an Alexandria hospital for Thursday and so she was writing Kay to decline the invitation.

Mildred McCoy 'phoned me today, explaining she would keep me only



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minute which, as a matter of fact, stretched to ~~seventy~~ seventy five minutes and might still have been going on briskly if I had not lied and said there was someone at the door and I must respond. Mildred asked me if I knew Jackson Bryon's daughter, Jo Ducarnot, owner of the Uncle Jack statue. She, Mildred, told me she wanted to place the statue in the garden of the Bayou Folk Museum and had spoken to la Ducarnot about letting her have it. Nothing definite had come from the initial contact about it and Mildred thought she might enlist my help if I cared to say a word in her behalf.

Mildred went on to include ....interruption.

Mildred was saying that la Ducarnot had mentioned to her that she and Herr Ducarnot had been living in California for a number of years when one day her husband announced he was going to Europe to study painting, --alone. And so he left and three years later, the wife received a cryptic note from friend husband, saying he had decided to come back to the States and would meet her and that he expected her to meet him in Natchitoches on a certain hour of a certain date. The wife's car had recently been destroyed by fire but she scurried around and bought another, locked her apartment and headed toward Louisiana. She pulled up in front of the hotel in Natchitoches on the appointed day and found her husband pacing the sidewalk. When he saw her approaching, he glanced at his watch and exclaimed:

"You are 10 minutes behind time."

So much for Herr Ducarnot. Frau D. has retained her California apartment ever since and hasn't even had the telephone cut off. I doubt if they have much money but they certainly know how to spend what they have somewhat foolishly, it would appear.

The enclosure is from a lady living in south Louisiana. When I heard Mildred's voice on the phone, I thought I would mention the letter to Mildred since Mildred was born a LaCaze or however the name is spelled, for there are several different ways, thinking Mildred might be able to lend a hand in ferreting out the family connection. Oddly enough the grave marker I placed in the African House which the letter writer obviously did not get to during her Pilgrimage visit here, has the identity of a LaCaze, born in 1743 or some such date, --quite early for this area. I mentioned this when responding to the letter penned from Pitkin. I shall call Mildred in a day or two and enlist her services for the Pitkin correspondence.

Much more to chatter about but the hour advanceth and I must fold. I hope it was the kind of a weekend little Miss Lee liked in and about Lyme.....

15784

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Monday, October 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and chill. It has been interesting during the past week to notice that low down Louisiana have been having about the same temperatures as up high Colorado which doesn't seem to make much sense.

The merchant-planter has been running a slight fever of late. He continues driving himself so hard and wondering the while that he isn't feeling peppy. There are so many similarities in his slowness of physical activities reminding his mama and occasional quotations of depressing lines of poems quoted by her when she became less active.

On Sunday afternoon about 5, his wife called Lestan, saying he wanted to take a little ride and suggested Lestan might like to go along. The wife wasn't too enthusiastic about it but went along as chauffeur. Shortly after the ride had got started, the merchant-planter observed a good rain was to be desired in the orchards. Some distance further, he expressed the hope the weather would remain dry to facilitate the gathering of cotton. The driver pointed up the inconsistency.

Back home the master said he was going to skip supper and after the wife and Lestan had started to partake, the master undressed and flattened out with some reading material. After supper the wife explained she needed to look after him and so said Goodnight to Lestan who departed toward the side gate. Half way there, he was called back by frantic cries wife who clasped him by the hand as he came up on the gallery, exclaiming that "this is all I needed at the end of such a day".

Leading Lestan by the hand, she approached the bedroom, paused before entering and leaning forward, called out frantically if we might enter. One glance revealed the master was not in the bed. Back in a far corner, the master was leaning over, slapping ineffectually at the floor with a fly-swatter.

Gradually it dawned on Lestan that the cause of the wife's commotion was none other than a little old camilleon, perhaps 3 inches in length, impossible to see without very bright eyes as the runyon which it rested as multi-colored in an all-over pattern. A rocking chair came down on the



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harmless intruder and Lestan, waving aside assistance, picked it up in the palm of his hand and withdrew. It would seem such a flurry of excitement would not be the best thing on the part of the wife to quiet things down for the patient. There is talk of going to Mayo's although, to everyone else, it would appear that just a little slackening of exertion is the thing that is needed, even as has been recommended by physicians on every occasion the advice of specialists is sought.

Tomorrow somebody is giving an all day party at some camp on Black Lake and perhaps that will bring things around to rights to serve as a breathing spell all around.

I did a little reading over the weekend although I didn't have anything in particular that appealed to me. One thing I dipped into was "Orbit of China" by Harrison Saulsbury whose name may be spelled that way or several other ways. Like many a Cane River column, the title may be said to be better than the piece itself. It is an account of impressions of places bordering on China as reported by a newspaperman. I learned a heap of things about the various countries touching on China as gathered together from the reporters note books over the years. It is not a book I should have dipped into, had there been something else but I'm glad I got the impressions it offers.

Natalie called to say she had rec'd the Andreassen letter which I had sent four days before, --four days to travel 15 miles. She said a companion of her husband during the past 20 or 40 years, --a man who served as guide, handy man and hunting or fi companion had been found in the woods, having died of a heart bust. The two men had been fishing together Saturday and everything seemed alright then. The long association naturally made a profound effect when the sudden loss was sensed by the news.

The waxing moon rides high in a cloudless sky tonight. After a turn in the Ghana garden, the thermometer in the 40's, I am returning to indulge in a bowl of cream of mushroom soup, enlivened with some additions such as a chopped up bell pepper, a of hard boiled eggs, quartered, croutons and so on which sounds ju right for a nippy night.....

15786

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Tuesday, October 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and slightly warmer. Last night's frost "cooked" the butterfly lilies. Whether some will come out later if the weather warms further remains to be seen.

Ola Mae Word 'phoned me from Shreveport this morning. She said a Mrs. Hale of the Dallas Morning News wanted to come down into the Cane River country to get an impression of the region in order to write feature articles for the morning news. She thought she might get down this way after 4 this afternoon or sometime tomorrow.

Ola Mae asked me if I had ever been to Rosedown. I told her I not been there since its restoration. She said she would like to have Carolyn and me join her there some time when she was down t

I asked her what the news might be from Carolyn. She said she talked with her last night and that she had told her she was flying over to Beaumont today to discuss the possibility of making film for some oil company there.

At noon I told the clerk that there was a possibility some Mrs. Hale might drop by during the afternoon or tomorrow and that I would see her. About 2:30 while I was in the White Garden, I heard my 'phone ring. It was the clerk reporting that some lady me was driving him crazy at the store. He said he had directed her to the front gate where I would find her. I went to the front gate where I didn't find her. I began combing the gardens and eventually caught up with her. She was a small person, past middle age. She didn't strike me as a newspaper woman who wanted a tour out of me, started off by denouncing me for having her waiting. She didn't appear concerned with what Melrose had to offer. We had completed the go-round in 15 minutes. She knew nothing about the place and began by starting an argument that no person of color could ever have owned the place since colored people couldn't own property in the old days. She of course had never heard of Clementine Hunter and when I remarked that she enjoyed a measure of popularity, she laughed and observed that she could scarcely believe that since she had never heard of her but she did take a piece of paper out of her handbag and asked how to spell the woman's name, repeating each letter after me.

A few minutes later when she approached Yucca, she asked of what material the walls were made. I told her they were of mud,



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mixed with deer hair. She took out the piece of paper and pencil, saying she had never heard of such a thing. She asked me again about the material and then, as she wrote it down, spelled it as she went along:

"Dear hair".

Turning the pencil and paper to her bag, she said she had no more time to waste at one stop, asked if there were other plantations along the river and said she wanted to get back to Shreveport this evening. I handed her to her car, asked her to convey greetings to Ola Mae Word and that was that.

I couldn't make out if she had a natural lisp or merely an accent of Latin origin. Somewhere along the way, she pointed to some tall banana plants, asking me what they were. She volunteered the information that where she came from, such plants were never seen explaining further that for the past twenty five years she had been living in Syracuse, New York. "Oui, nous n'avons pas des bananes".

James just called. He said that Kay was taken ill last Friday and that the lady doctor had sent her to Shumpert Memorial Hospital in Shreveport. I never believe in asking for particulars about the nature of a patient's illness and especially from a husband or wife, assuming that the matter will be touched upon if the person with whom one is in conversation cares to go into such details. All I got out of the case was that it was expected Kay might be at Shumpert for some time or, if not there, at least some place where she could get a good rest. It seems to me it was only two or three weeks ago that Kay was in the local hospital for a check-up which seemed to wind up to everyone's satisfaction. I asked if the husband thought the wife would like to hear from me and he said he felt sure she would. I shall get a letter off to her in the next mail.

I inquired about the status of the Roumanian lady who was to be Kay's guest this week. Thursday having been the day decided upon for the impending tea. James said he supposed Sudie who had engineered the thing in the first place, would probably take over. Ruth Crabtree is with Kay at the Shreveport hospital so where la Roumanie will be housed is somebody's problem. Perhaps servants from 406 will be sent down to 209 South to dispense hospitality or perhaps not. So things turn and I shall be glad to learn some more particulars. The conversation with James was cut when the party line suddenly snapped out of kilter and now I must snap into a been of desk work.....

15788

Wednesday  
Thursday, October 30th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and warmer within the 50 - 80 range. It will delight me if the warmth continues so the butterfly lilies may have another go at blossoming before Jack Frost takes over in earnest.

I was glad to receive a nice visit from Father Calahan this afternoon. He had been spending a week or two in New Orleans and was on his way to where ever he makes his home in Arkansas, stopping off at Ile Brevelle for a few days en route. He and I incline to plunge right in to any subject that chance to interest us at the moment we get together. Today we covered a whole flock of topics, starting off with speculation about the Church of Rome and the Greek equivocal ruling on the divorce that made possible the marriage of Madam Kennedy earlier in the month. I cannot believe it but Father Calahan declared he had never heard of the Vanderbilt-Marlborough-Bazin or Balzan business. I am under the impression he was merely trying to refresh his own memory of that celebrated case by pleading ignorance of it in order to have me outline it for him.

Today we dined across the fence, Lull Hankins, the clerk and I joining the merchant-planter and spouse. The merchant planter was in bed when I passed across the fence at 9. I suppose he had been to the store at dawn and returned for further rest. He left at 1 o'clock to go to the hospital for further tests. He is supposed to remain there for 2 or 3 days but he stated with some show of disregard for medical opinion that he had no intention of remaining there for more than 24 hours. It's the same old story of consulting all kinds of advice from physicians and paying not the slightest attention when it comes to following their recommendations.

I talked with the Squire again. He said his wife's difficulties revolved around her lack of getting nourishing food. He said that no sooner would she



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receive a broad list of foods she might eat to her advantage, she would immediately revolt against one or the other until she was avoiding all that were requisite. It seems that added to this absence of food is the tendency, not studied but merely through failure to pay attention to such matters, that pill taking increases and, empty of stomach, she naturally succumbs to pills the more. I believe she fainted on Friday last past while at 209 South, Ruth Crabtree calling the lady doctor who whisked her to the local hospital where she remained a day or two and then was transported to Shreveport. It is thought after a physical build-up, a prolonged rest period will be recommended. As there is scant if any physical exertion to begin with, I don't know what an extension of a rest period implies. I would assume the creation, if possible, of any interest in something, --anything, if it could exert interest for her would be just the thing. It is my understanding, although I can say in truth it is only an impression, that the patient suffered a loss of memory from the time she fainted on Friday until some time Monday but re-gained her sense of orientation completely after that 48 hour interval. Naturally, the husband was very depressed about the whole business. La Crabtree is in Shreveport at the hospital with the patient and the husband looks in at the hospital frequently.

The political campaign runs along madly in the final stages between now and Tuesday. At the time of the Chicago convention, I think I mentioned having wondered if NBC was leaning pretty heavily in the direction of the Republican Party. I notice in the past couple of days that NBC is the net work showing the documentary film, objected to by everybody, Republican and Democrat, having any sense of fairness. Perhaps the Republicans have been throwing more of their advertising toward NBC than the other major net works. I do hope the broadcasting companies may not go Hearst on us, indulging in the same slanted stories that made the Hearst papers so notorious back in the first third of this century.

The moon is radiant tonight and what with the temperature being so mild, it will be pleasant to take a turn in the Ghana garden with the furred friends before calling it a day.....

15790

15790

Thursday, October 31st, 1968.

Memorandum:

60 to 80 and withal fair.

This evening about 7 minutes before 7, while I was trying to extract a dab of news out of the air waves, the program suddenly faded and another voice took over to announce the President of the United States.

L. B. J. came on and delivered the news about his calling off of the bombing North of the so-called de-militarized zone in southeast Asia.

It was explained subsequently that since somebody had already started putting the speech, --recorded, -- into print in advance of the time agreed upon for release, the President had decided to move up the clock for his speech in an attempt to keep abreast of the speech itself which had been rushed ahead of time by the press. I never did hear what papers or other news media had "jumped the gun" on releasing the speech prior to the broadcasting of the President's recorded delivery. It seemed to me the delivery of the speech was not quite up to the usual Presidential standard and, of course, I have no idea why a recording was made in advance since one usually associates such deliveries, --that is to say of such important speeches, as being delivered "live".

I happened to be tuned in on CBS and was glad to hear the various commentators who followed the President.

What the witches and hobgoblins thought of the President hornning in on their evening, so often reserved exclusively for them, I don't know. There were parties at various schools in town for the children and I heard music floating across the cotton patch from the direction of the honkey-tonk but I never did encounter any celebrants or those who indulge in "trick or treat".

I was glad to hear from Rudolph in today's mail and particularly his account of his later summer visit along



02721

15791

the route from Lima to Bogota and on to Panama.

Of all pre-Columbian civilizations in this side of the Atlantic, the Inca one has always interested me most. I find I have forgotten how to spell the name of that more remote city city, so high in the Andies. If I recall correctly, the Conquistadores never did discover its location and therefore did not wreck it leaving that job to old Father Time. I don't even know if anybody ever got there before Hiram Bingham discovered it around the first decade of the 1900's. I find myself wondering why I, myself, never seem to have looked into any of the papers which that Connecticut Senator brought forth following his exploration of the place although, like everybody else, I seem to have read quite a bit about the expedition by other people. I am not sure how much Bingham did about setting down records although I am under the impression that like Arthur Evans in Crete, he did gather together quite a collection of papers about it and I have no doubt they have been published more or less extensively, even as was the Evans efforts in Crete.

From time to time I hear people say that there are still lots of pre-Columbian ruins in Central and South America that have never been examined and very probably quite a few not even discovered as yet. I recall that when the boy friend was stationed in Bogota, he made quite a trip into the jungles and photographed imposing ruins at some remote locality which was called Elderado, I believe. The photographs of these remains were very impressive although one had to examine them with care to determine what was architecture and what was jungle growth. Now that travelers can reach such remote places with comparative ease where landing places have been developed, I suppose the records of these vanished centers of ancient times will begin emerging rapidly in the days ahead.

On the political front, today's radio stated that Richard Nixon and family cast their absentee ballots in New York today. I don't blame them for wanting to get ahead of the election day crowds but I am surprised that they cast their votes in advance for several reasons, a couple of them being that I thought such advance ballots were cast only when prospective voters would not be in town on election day and I have no doubt the Nixons are likely to be in Manhattan on that day. Then, too, most Presidents in the past seem to have made it a point to make the gesture of voting on election day as an example for other and lesser citizens to go and do likewise but every man to his own way of doing things. ...and now I must round up my broomstick and fly around a bit before calling it a day.....

02721

15792

Friday, November 1st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and mild with a glorious moon "with queenly motion" dipping through the quiet calm

It was a double dip for Lest, n at the Post Office today, not one but two message all in the same post.

It is so good of little Miss Lee to keep me advised as to how things turn. Turn doesn't seem to be just the right word, however, which should be something like spin instead of turn, what with all that has been going on, around and about.

Last week's visit from the travelers from beyond the blue was too long. Thank Heaven the return pause will be less lengthy and may little Miss Lee somehow be able to catch her breath along the way.

From all I hear on tenuous matters, I take it that one great blessing is the opportunity it gives, or should I say that it requires a human being to indulge in when the perruque is being looked after. If one were only able to close one's eyes and so get a maximum of rest while that business is being attended to.

I am so happy to learn of the musical interlude that is to be recalled as being spent with congenial friends and how nice it is to know that Tosca will provide the medium for exploring the new playhouse. I shall be all ears to hear about whole business and the impressions created thereby.

I am so glad that little Miss Lee mentioned the anniversary of the event which, measured by years, seems so far and yet when calculated by the heart, seems but yesterday. I never cease to marvel about this thing called Time and how little we know about it and how differently it reverts different events. Of course the things we live with every hour of the day never recede at all but, on the contrary seem forever closer and dearer with the passage of time.



15793

leaves flying off the calendar which somehow don't seem to  
at all in the general scheme of things that really matter.

And how may I indicate how much I appreciate the clipping  
the happy thoughts it brings to mind, thoughts forever shared  
by kindred souls interested in the same things. I am  
impatient to read the mail again on the morrow and to run thru  
the clipping again, too. It would be useless to speculate  
on the identity of the person who gave the contribution  
toward the restoration of the Marie Antoinette bedroom. I  
can think of a few people of whom we might have heard and pro-  
bably there are lots more whose identity might never have been known.  
At the same time, I find myself wondering, --that's why I want  
to re-read the clipping, --as or with the hope of finding  
another word, phrase or sentence that I may have missed when  
reading the article the first and only time tonight. For  
I can think of two bedrooms in the big palace which the  
queen occupied at various times, --the big formal one  
in the so-called Queen's apartments, that is to say the State ap-  
artment on the south side of the "envelope", --  
that is to say from the Queen's staircase just off the  
courtyard and running through to the Salon de la Paix at the  
giving in to the Galleries des Glaces. And then  
there is that smaller bedroom just between the  
Queen's state apartment and the little secret apartments  
hidden away inside the inner courtyard,  
more or less half way between the King's State bedroom on  
the east and the Galleries des Glaces on the west. There may  
have been others, too, that I do not know about. And  
then, of course, there is her bedroom at Petit  
Trianon which, in a way was more hers than anyone else  
since no other Queens of France ever occupied it either  
before or after Marie Antoinette. I have no doubt and cer-  
tainly hope subsequent particulars, let us hold the thought  
in color reproduction, may be forthcoming when the work has  
been completed.

In today's post came a package which seemed to be about  
size of two books. Although addressed to me, it turned out  
that it was intended for "the boys", two packages of  
cat food, sent by James to tide over the twins during  
Doreatha's absence. "The boys" will pen a letter to  
the Register dog, making acknowledgement of receipt of  
aforesaid gift. I continue to learn nothing about  
Doreatha but continue holding the thought she may be putting  
in an appearance any day now. And now I shall take  
a turn in the Ghana garden, then knock off a column, --  
something about pigeons, I guess, and that will be it for ton-  
ight.

15794

Sunday, November 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Saturday was a beautiful day and so was last night  
until about 5 o'clock when it turned cool, --five  
o'clock this morning, I meant to say, and it rained a  
little, perhaps 3 tenths of an inch, remaining cloudy  
and in the 60's all day. We are promised clearing  
skies for election.

J. H. came home from the hospital at noon Saturday  
but returned for the night at 6 o'clock, coming back this  
noon to spend the afternoon and tonight.

Like most people who do such things without realizing  
it, I succeeded in painting myself into a corner almost, --  
as the saying goes. I believe, however, I have succeeded in  
evading the trap I had set for myself and this is how that  
game worked.

On Saturday afternoon James 'phoned to ask if I ex-  
pected to be at home. I said I was and would be kicking out  
the red carpet. On his arrival, he presented me with a big  
package of ice cream and a framed picture he had  
painted of a figure in a turban, done in montage style.

After that he drew from his pocket a copy of the  
Jallon book, a copy of which had been sent him by the pub-  
lisher. Somehow it seemed a little thinner and smaller  
than I had expected. I know not where I got the notion that  
he was including some pictures in it, things like  
Foxster's Mound, Dr. Rousseau's, Andrew Marschallk and so on but it  
weren't any illustration except a small map of Africa.

We talked of many things regarding the promotion of  
the book which, of course, I have not read in this version.

It seemed the appropriate time to inquire about the  
column I had written about the book which I had given to him  
to run through with me so that he might add any phrases or  
change about if he cared to. He said he had re-typed the  
thing and I said if he wanted to run through it,  
we might do so right then and he could drop it off at  
Natalie's when he went to town so it could be properly  
typed for the papers and thus get it going without too much  
delay although all of that should have been done a few weeks back  
since they are already running three weeks or more ahead of



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the date they appear in print. He said he would be glad to drop  
Natalie's and somehow time had run along so that he had to leave  
without running through it with me.

Later in the day, around 5, I called Natalie  
who said that James had brought it and had just left. She asked  
if I thought we should run through it right then. I thought  
we should. I cannot tell you how amazed we both were  
when we discovered that my original article had not been  
used as a frame-work but that an entirely new column had been  
written. Neither of us found it to suit our taste in any way,  
material employed, changing of sentences, sometimes in the  
present, sometimes in the past but all within the same  
paragraph, etc., etc. It simply wouldn't do and yet  
I had promised to let him use it, --the column that is, but  
I certainly had supposed my entire work would not be thrown  
out, not that my work was anything special, but at least as  
much of my style as to suggest it was the framework of my  
column at least. I told Natalie I had a copy of the  
original column I had written at the time I gave him the  
original when I offered it to him for use as a  
formula or some such. She said we simply couldn't put this  
one out under my name and that perhaps if I sent her a copy of  
my original, we might be able to patch it some how to get by.

That, on the face of it, was impossible, but I said I would  
send it to her in Monday mail and we could then start tearing  
our hair. After I had hung up, a solution suddenly dawned  
on me, illustrating how one can eat his cake and have it, too.

To avoid shocking and disappointing the author beyond re-  
pair, I am recommending to Natalie, suggesting we run the column  
just as James wrote it, inserting after the opening  
paragraph a single sentence, stating that this is an article  
just received from a friend about a new book which I want to share  
with the readers immediately and that I shall possibly write one  
on my own hook a little later when I, too, have had an  
opportunity to read the volume. Except for that insertion, contin-  
through with the material he had written for the column, being  
careful to enclose the balance as well as the initial  
paragraph in quotation marks. That gives him the satisfaction  
of knowing his version was printed completely. Within a week or two  
if it seems worth while, I can print my own column as a follow-  
up, ostensibly for additional publicity. "Damn clever, these Ch-  
I hope."

"So near yet so far" seemed to cover this episode momentarily  
but, as worked out "to save face, perhaps "all's  
well that ends well".....

15796

Monday, November 5th, 1968.

Memorandum: November 5, 1968

It remained cloudy until sundown tonight and  
the thermometer never did get out of the 60's and  
will go down into the 40's tonight.

But there was a mighty pretty sunbeam in the  
morning's post in the form of Friday's letter  
from Lyme. I never cease to be amazed at  
little Miss Lee's extraordinary memory, as witness the Princess  
clipping from the Times, giving the obituary of (Serge  
Cantacuzene-Speranski. That little Miss Lee should  
have remembered the name of that family simply astonishes  
me.

It was Julia and her son, Michael whom I admired so  
much. As a matter of fact, Julia always im-  
pressed me as being one of the most exquisite ladies of  
the European aristocracy, so charming, so lovely and so apprecia-  
tive of cultural values that blossomed so luxuriantly  
all across Europe before World War One knocked every-  
thing silly.

Like so many family trees on both sides  
of the Atlantic, in every level of society and in  
every century, there are always so many people bearing  
identical names, not only in succeeding genera-  
tions but sometimes even in the same generations who  
have similar names that I, for one, at least,  
experience the greatest difficulty in keeping them  
straight in my own mind and memory although I reckon  
I should do little better if I had them all written out  
and could keep an eye on them. The Michael whom  
I had in mind lived in Sarasota, Florida, but  
apparently the one mentioned in the obituary is  
of another generation, possibly one generation earlier. It  
seems to me he and I had a mutual friend who lived somewhere  
in the neighborhood of that Florida city and I must  
bestir myself to look into all this business.

And the mention of the Cantacuzenes re-  
minds me of another family of whom I have lost  
all trace, the Witte klay so active in  
the days of Nicholas the Second when Witte  
during the first decade of the present century, engineered



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the big P. W. A. projects in the role of Minister for the Czar I have forgotten how any of the Wittes escaped from the revolution and it seems to me not all of them did. I may have mentioned at one time or another the surprising meeting I had with a grandson of the Czarist Minister at a supper party at the Waldorf late in the '20's and how delightful the whole thing turned out.

The name, Witte, is one of those few names of people that I do not associate with those few I failed to recognize because in this particular instance, I had never heard it pronounced any other way than in the European manner, the W more like a V and the last letter, e, sounded to make it a two syllable rather than a single syllable word. Hence, for quite a while in New York, when I heard people speaking of Count Witt, it never dawned on me that they were actually speaking of Witte. I doubt if anyone can be dumber than I in failing to imagine what words are being spoken in cases where I should really know but fail to recognize same if they are tossed off in a different pronunciation than the one to which I have been accustomed.

I had a telephone conversation with James today. He said he was feeling mighty happy, having had a long conversation with Kay from her Shreveport hospital this morning. With an air of pride, she had related all the good things she had eaten for breakfast, including sausage, of all things, --proof positive that her physicians at Schumpert hospital must be having remarkable success in thus having succeeded in persuading her she is hungry and should eat. It was heartening to hear James say how glad he was she had thus been set on the right track and now he felt sure he would never have to worry again on that score. I wish I might feel the same way for the sakes of both of them but it seems to me I have heard such hopes expressed as joyfully before.

James told me he had seen Natalie on Saturday evening and that she had given him some slabs of cake which he found much to his liking. I had rather expected to hear from her tonight regarding the leger-de-main Leston had thought up yesterday but in the first place, she hasn't had time to receive the letter which went forward only this morning, and, it is quite possible that if she has tried, she hasn't been successful in getting a call through, the Delphin children seem to be having so many calls tonight.

And tomorrow come election day and I shall be holding the thought little Miss Lee's favorite candidate may have luck, if, indeed, winning such a headache is luck.....

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*Electim Day*  
Tuesday, November 5th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy and cool, clearing at sundown, followed around 9 o'clock tonight by a fine cold front that pushed in an electric storm that made radio reception impossible, try as one might to keep abreast with the Presidential election returns.

I tried to get in touch by Doreatha's children by 'phone but the Delphin kids had the wires all tied up. I also wanted to learn how Doreatha's husband, Ezra, was doing, too. This morning about first day he was at the store where he had some kind of a seizure, heart, I suppose, and was rushed off to the Hatchitoches hospital. News of that will certainly make Doreatha impatient to return from the Confederate Memorial hospital in Shreveport where she has been for the past couple of weeks, her operation having taken place yesterday, I believe..

I had rather expected to have a call from Natalie today, even as I did yesterday but I reckon she found it impossible to get a call through, what with the Delphin kids monopolizing see wire. There is nothing urgent about the matter of the column or, more precisely, the two columns about the Jallen volume but I shall certainly be glad to get that rigged up properly to the satisfaction of all as soon as I can, assuming, of course, that such problems are ever untagled to the satisfaction of anybody.

I talked with James this afternoon. He seemed to be in fine spirits, eagerly awaiting the end of the week when he expects the wife and la Crabtree to be back. Nothing was said about the column other than the information he volunteered that Natalie is taking care of the copy he gave her.

I don't know if I have mentioned it or not but, as usually happens at this time of the year, the wild goose migration is in full swing. Several nights in the past week I have heard the birds honking their way southward in numerous waves through the night. I haven't heard anyone mention having seen geese of the Canadian variety on the river but lots of ducks have been mentioned as coming down to the surface of the water at



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sundown. It is my understanding there are several water ways between their nesting places in Canada and the Gulf Coast where both geese and ducks come to rest on their trip but it is possible when they get this far south, they feel they can make their final jaunt to the marshlands along the coast without having to stop off for rest periods along the way. Come to think of it, I discover I don't know if other types of birds that go on to South America make their trips in the manner of the hummingbirds in a non-stop journey or not. I believe some types of songsters, however, tend to follow the curve of the Texas coast and on through Yuccatan so that they have ample places of firm ground to rest along the way and I sometimes wonder why the hummingbirds do not follow such a course instead of making the bee-line slap across the Gulf. Perhaps they follow the theory that the longest way 'round is not the sweetest way home.

As between this paragraph and the above I took a look at the weather of which there was a great deal and then decided I would fill in time awaiting a clearing of the air waves by taking off my long beard, --leisurely for once. Half an hour later, I surveyed the heavens again and saw nothing was going on but with lesser intensity and so I tried to extract a bit of election news from the radio. I could hear every 4th or 5th word of each sentence all of which threw little enlightenment on what I was trying to find out. I gather the race is a neck and neck sort of thing and so I reckon I can fold up my beard and awaiting something more comprehensible on the morrow.

I have some pilgrims on my docket for tomorrow morning and I shall welcome that excuse to avoid scuffling around in the midst of gardening. I devoted the better part of today concentrating on rounding up ancient bricks and laying out a walk from the side gate by the big magnolia so that it will provide, --that is the brick walk, a better foundation running from the point of inception by the side gate in the general direction of the old cistern by the side of the big house. At the same time, I laid out a circular brick walk around the prairie, --a circular one, about half way between Yucca and the little conservatory approaching the side gate to give greater elevation in that walkway which usually inclines to be dampish during the rainy season. And so I find myself physically tired and quite willing to let Messrs Humphy and Nixon do their own tabulating during the long watches of the night, leaving me fresh to learn of their findings on the morrow.

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Wednesday, November 6th, 1968.

Memorandum:

After an inch and a half of rain last night, dawn came along with a cloudless sky, the thermometer remaining in the 60's all day in spite of the sunshine.

It was such an unexpected plaisir to discover a Monday Lyme letter in today's post. May I say how much I relished every word and all the splendid clippings.

How remarkable that little Miss Lee should have encountered the likeness of Roane in the November issue of the National Geographic. And how nice of you to indicate page 681 so that I may the more readily turn to it when I borrow the copy from across the fence. Someone said the other day across the fence that there was a likeness of the same lady in the Sunday magazine section. It wasn't the other day but today, come to think of it, and after noon dinner, the lady set about looking for it but couldn't remember if it was in an Alexandria, Shreveport or New Orleans paper. It is an interesting coincidence that this matter should have come up in the conversation at noon and then discover Roan's name mentioned this evening when a secretary came to help me with today's post.

And may I say how much I appreciate the reference to the October 18th issue of Life in which the article by David Snell appears. Very frequently I run several weeks behind in magazine reading. For instance in the matter of the recorded Look magazine, I am usually about a month behind in reading it, having only run through the October 1st issue this past week. In the case of Life, I always keep them aside until I have someone to run through them with me and it often happens that I am three or four weeks behind while awaiting the right secretary and the proper opportunity to go into same. I am expecting to have such an opportunity on the morrow and already have the October 18th issue readily to hand to start in on it.

I am glad you found the columns of interest. The one about those Chinese gentlemen, buried at Ile Brevelle graveyard evoked some interest from several different types



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of readers, mulatto neighbors, Natchitoches readers and some members of the clergy, including Father Calahan who asked me to go into the matter at some length when he was here the other day. Father Calahan had never heard of the graves in his former domain and I was glad to be able to indicate the spot to him. When buried there about 100 years ago, they were placed at the very back of the church and at the farthest distance enclosed by the cemetery wall. During Father Calahan's tenure of office, the graveyard was enlarged, the wall along the west end of the graveyard having been pushed back several feet. Madame Aubin-Roque, Celine Roque and other oldsters had frequently pointed them out but as none of us were advised about the plans for the enlarging of the graveyard and had heard nothing about it for months after it had been done, it was impossible to determine exactly where they had been, what with all the changes instituted by inexperienced workmen under the auspices of people not too concerned at that time about much by way of history that had transpired there so long ago. I don't recall if I hinted in the article that oldsters in the neighborhood forever speculating in hush-hush fashion if these two drowning victims had been pushed out of the boat in which they were crossing the river with people of a different race who, like youngsters, can sometimes be cruel to anyone not conforming precisely to their own racial pattern. Ever since I first heard of this tragedy, I have wondered about the novel some Pearl Buck, knowing China and America, might write on the subject some future age and for that reason was especially anxious to get the outline into print for some future author.

At 11 o'clock this morning, after having just divested myself of the batch of pilgrims who had come by appointment, I immediately tuned in on the radio to see if there might be further news about the election. There was. And so I learned that Mr. Nixon had won the election. Automatically I prayed the Lord that Mr. Nixon might survive his Presidency because, without knowing just why, I have gained the impression that Vice President-elect Agnew is deltish and scarcely equipped to play the role of Chief Executive.

While I regretted Mr. Humphry didn't achieve the office, I must say in all truth that I think it nothing short of phenomenal that after all the rumpus at the Chicago convention, that he should have come so close.

A glance toward the White Garden reminds me that the moon is glorious and that I had better take a turn in the Ghala garden before sampling a slab of pound cake and a hunk of chocolate swirl icecream and then calling it a day.....

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Thursday, November 7th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Partly cloudy all day but clear as a bell tonight. The weather man says there may be a frost before morning and this I am inclined to believe, what with the thermometer never having risen out of the 50's all day.

It was so good of little Miss Lee to mention the October 18th issue of Life and the article by David Snell which I had an opportunity to run through today. I am so interested in the way he handled the material, --rather differently than many of the things of his that I have read over the past few years, primarily, perhaps, because the subject in itself is rather different from those to which I have become accustomed. I should really have lost something important to me, had this escaped my attention.

The mention of Douglaston reminded me of something, in no way related, that I had forgotten about years ago and perhaps should never have thought of, had I not so unexpectedly bumped into Douglaston. The name of Douglaston reminded me of the late actor, Mr. D. Fairbanks and how one used to see them occasionally in Paris, --they, in this instance, being D. Fairbanks, senior, and his wife, Mary Pickford. Even as was so all over the world, so were they very popular in Paris and the mere mention of them calls back the old days when they would be recognized by their fans who never tired of singing their praises and the crowds, should they catch sight of them in public, never could restrain themselves from shouting:

"Vive Dou-gla! Vive Marie!"

It always seemed to tickle Douglas, not so much, I think, the omission of the "s" as in the breaking of the word the way they did so that the first syllable was very minor, that is to say, the "Dou" part, divided right they with the "Dou", with the second syllable initiated with force in the "gla" section.

Alors, vive Marie, vive Dou - GLA.

And speaking of pronunciations, I have noticed only lately the difference between the way radio announcers say Kronkite or however the name is spelled and the way Walter Kronkite manages the second syllable. Somehow he manages in such a way as to make the last part of it sound as though there were a touch of an "o" in there so that it almost rhymes with hoyt, --not quite but certainly not so much kite as coyt.



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I talked with James this afternoon. He said he had received the shipment and is very pleased with it. He threatens to bring my shipment shortly while I, in turn, threaten to start one off toward Lyme as soon as the item comes to hand. He had talked with Kay a little earlier and she is impatient to get back home, the doctor having promised her she might within a few days. It seems she is up and walking about now.

Mildred McCoy called me this evening just as I was in the midst of finishing up with a secretary. She said she wanted to ask my advice about something she was sending in to the local paper if approved. She promised to keep me only a minute but after 40 minutes had elapsed, she having long since finished the article, I had to break off to finish up what I was doing and let the poor slave depart. I suppose the article may appear in the Natchitoches paper within a week or two. It is about a monument in the Cloutierville graveyard, a fine marble one at the grave of Marco, the same gentleman from whose dismantled house the cotton stencil gracing the Yucca living room was discovered. Should you chance across the article when it appears, it might be worth saving. If I hear about when it appears, I shall refer to it when sending the paper, at least a week or two hence. I think Mildred is quite daring to point out that Mark was at least one Louisiana planter who straightforwardly married a lady of color and raised a family. I have forgotten the last name of this prominent planter, mentioned in "Old Louisiana" Marco being the nickname for -- Rouquitch or Maranovitch or some such name a man who had hailed from Austria in ante bellum times. The paneling and the casement windows at Yucca were used by Lyle when the Marko house was being torn down which happened to be just at the time Lyle was re-furbishing Yucca.

Mildred got off the track on ante bellum matters and fell to talking about her father, Sam Lacaze, whom Mildred said was taught to read and write by Miss Cam when Sam Lacaze worked for the J. H. Henrys when they lived at Henryville, near Cloutierville. Miss Cam must have had an apt pupil for Mildred's papa at the time of his death had accumulated a fortune, leaving a million or so to Mildred.

Mildred also sought my advice about an old tombstone she has discovered in a pasture down Cloutierville. The only words the piece of marble carries is "Ici repose Alexandre Cloutier". He came from France without a dime in his pocket but promptly proceeded to make a fortune although, like so many of his day, unable to read or write.

Natalie finally succeeded in reaching me on the 'phone tonight and we settled several points about impending columns. A week or two will intervene between the review James did, incorporated in a column, and the review Leston did. It may be interesting to compare the differences in handling the same subject when both become available.....

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Friday, November 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Drizzle all day, pouring tonight and the promise of rain all day Saturday with the thermometer remaining almost stationary in the upper 40's and lower 50's. As a matter of fact, the weather is so much like a November day that one might go so far as to say it is indeed one.

I want to say again how much I appreciate the thoughtfulness in calling my attention to the David Snell article in the 19th of October Life. In speaking of David Snell last night, there was one point I didn't get around to mention and so shall do so now, thinking it might be of interest. His mama, Ada Jack Carver Snell, remains in Minden where someone is always with her since she is far from well. As a matter of fact, only a few weeks ago some one mentioned that today she seems to remind the family so much of her mental condition a short time before David was born when she was terribly upset. I can't recall if I ever mentioned this before or not but I don't mind repeating. The first born child to be born into the family of Ada Jack and John Snell was a boy. When the offspring was quite small there was a terrible accident. Ada Jack and the little boy's nurse showered attention of the little fellow and both cared for him jointly in almost everything. As was customary each morning, both the mother and nurse began making preparations for the little one's bath. I believe it was the nurse who got out the tiny tub while Ada Jack heated the water. Who was responsible for what after that was never stressed, naturally enough, but suffice it is to say that apparently the mother had in mind to warm the tub by pouring the hot water in it and then tempering it to the proper warmth after which the baby was placed in the little tub. Somehow there was a mix-up and when Ada Jack poured the boiling water into the tub, the baby was already there. The poor thing died shortly afterward and for quite a while Ada Jack was in a highly nervous condition. Within the year, I believe, the only other child to Ada Jack and John was born, -- David.

Regarding a local resident, I may have mentioned Father Frederick, head of the Ile Brevelle Church who took



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over the directorship of the Church of the Children of Strangers and its smaller churches in this general area when Father Calahan retired and moved to Arkansas. I think Father Fredericks had been stationed here years ago when Father Bumgartner was head of the organization. Anyway, Celeste has known him for a long and was very fond of him. This afternoon one of the lady parishoners to the Rectory to attend to some business with Father Fredericks, entering the home and going back to his office. On entering the room she was shocked to see him slumped over in his chair and, because she was so startled, she turned a flew out of the room banging the door behind her. Hunting up somebody, she reported what had happened but when they went to see what was what, they realized that the door that had been closed so vigorously had had a latch on it and they couldn't get in. Finally with much assistance, they did succeed in gaining entrance and it was discovered the man had died of a heart attack. Celeste had spent the day in Shreveport and so did not learn about until she returned home this evening when J. H., who had spent the day in Alexandria, told her about it when she arrived for he had returned ahead of her.

I suppose Father Fredericks will be buried in Pittsburg, Pa., where his family lives.

I had hoped Doreatha might be back from the hospital today but it is said she has had a setback and one of her daughters has gone to help attend her.

The radio during the past couple of days has reported the murder of Ramon Navarro. I never saw the man but I enjoyed his work on the silent screen and I don't recall if he bridged the gap over into talkies. Once I shared a stateroom with his Swiss secretary during an Atlantic crossing. I thought him a splendid person and was much impressed by his admiration of R. N. of whom he never tired talking.

I talked with James on the 'phone this afternoon. Yesterday he had mentioned the possibility of coming down today but the drizzle caused him to change his mind. He was a bundle of news about political news he had gathered up from the newspapers on TV and I, of course, am always enchanted to learn news from media not falling within my range. It is interesting that he himself never votes. I believe this is based on the fact that he feels jury duty somehow has something to do about names appearing on registration lists. Whether this be correct or not, I do not know but since he feels it is, and since he abhors courts, it is sufficient to persuade him that voting is one thing in which he does not want to get entangled.

And so there will be no mail deliveries on Monday but one holds the thought that Veterans Day may be a happy one in Lyme.....

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Sunday, November 10th, 1968.

Memorandum:

SSaturday would be damp, the weather man said, but it turned out beautifully bright and 50-ish. Today was going to be fair according to the same weather man, but it sprinkled and poured alternately, remaining in the 40's.

Some opera company gave a performance of Carmen at the college Friday night and on Saturday afternoon some of them by appointment came down here. They were very nice and I was interested to learn from which sections of the country those present hailed, -- Virginia, Boston, New York and so on. I asked if the star of the performance was among those present. There seemed to be some fumbling for a direct response, a dab of nervous laughter in a subdued sort of way a then one of the gentlemen broke down, declaring that Miss Brown whom I gathered may have been the star, had expressed interest in visiting the old plantation but on second thought decided against it, not being certain if a person of color would be welcome. I hazarded the guess that if Leontine Price could make Laurel, Mississippi, I'll bet Miss Brown could make Melrose, Louisiana, casting about to find a pretty gourd to send back to her by them as a consolation prize.

This morning for breakfast, I sampled something I had never tried before, -- something that was supposed to be but wasn't quince jelly. Ruth Crabtree had made some quince jelly, she said, out of some quinces from a local tree. She gave me a glass of it. When held up to the light, it seemed to be opaque which impressed me since I always think of jelly as being more on the transparent side. When I got around to open the glass, however, I discovered the contents were of no solidity and when I put my spoon into it, I discovered that the juice had not been strained although the pulp was finely squeezed even as applesauce is sometimes made. It tasted good and I shall inquire about the recipe although only out of curiosity since I am not suddenly dreaming of making that or any other kind of jelly so long as same, although different in consistency can be purchased at a store.

James called this morning about 11 saying he had to come down this way and would drop off some dessert for me if I expected to be at home. On Sundays we usually eat about 12 but church doings today had put a crimp in the schedule and I didn't know just when I should be back from across the fence but suggested it would be after 1 o'clock. He was here when I arrived about 1:30, handing me a fine green salad and a cream pie. I guess he had promised the artist some things and hit on the idea of the salad and pie for me which I thought very kind. He did not sit down as he had been talking with Kay in Shreveport and she had hoped



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to get down with Mrs. Cr. free either this afternoon or tomorrow. James has been holding the thought that Kay would feel happier when back home again for, like most people, James finds hospitals dreary places, especially after one has recovered enough to be able to leave them.

I find it odd how difficult I have found it to learn what progress Doreatha is making. She is still in Shreveport and I receive such strange answers from this or that person whenever I inquire while every effort I have made to contact her family results in a blank wall which is due in large measure, I suppose, to the fact that both her party line and mine number 5 subscribers each and getting any call through a dozen party lines, heavily weighted with teen ages, is something like attempting the impossibilities. I chanced to see one of her neighbors at the Post Office Saturday morning and asked if there might be news that he had reached him. The man doesn't have much sense but is a kindly soul. Nevertheless he quite took my breath away when he said somebody said they reckoned she would be back alright by Christmas. Well, I should hope so.

If this memo seems more oddly spaced than usual, it may be due in part to the fact that it is being written in utter darkness and I have the sheet put under the roller a little out of line with its accustomed place so that my fingers do not seem to judge very well when the page approaches the right side of the machine. The lights did a dab of flickering this noon but came back on again in a minute or two. Tonight, however, it seems to be a different story for they simply went out and remained out. I suppose a car may have knocked down a power pole or some such and it may be hours before the current is restored. I suppose many homes, the honkey-tonks and the church may be operating on candle light.

This afternoon at 3, Father Frederick's body was brought down from the funeral home in town and placed in the Ile Brevelle church where services were held during the afternoon and were scheduled to continue tonight and the candles will certainly come in handy. A Mass will be said at 11 in the morning and the burial will take place in Pittsburgh on the morrow.

How the honkey-tonks make out, especially in keeping the beer cold, I wouldn't know.

And now I'm going to visit the Blessed Martin's chapel and borrow a candle from there, enabling me to do a better job on attacking the uncut pie from James. That, along with a glass of chocolate milk, ought to contribute to tonnage and inner satisfaction, don't you think.....

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Veteran's Day.  
Monday, November 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Drizzley and dreary with the thermometer in the 40's and the threat it will sag to 30 before morning.

It seemed odd there should be no mail today, what with all businesses going full tilt, the schools and everything else except the mails. I have an idea I know how a youthful attorney could get a million dollars worth of publicity if he wanted to do so. I could be wrong but my guess is that all he would have to do is serve as attorney for any Louisiana pupil or teacher in taking the State to court to force the State to give educational institutions holidays on any one or all of the national holidays. The thing would probably go to the Supreme Court in a hurry, attended by lots of publicity across the country and perhaps around the world, thereby giving the attorney more publicity than he could buy and at the same time giving workers, --educational and otherwise, time out when the national holidays roll 'round.

Funeral services for Father Frederick go under way at 11 o'clock this morning at the Ile Brevelle church. In spite of the inclement weather, there were lots of people made up not only of local parishioners but people from various parts of the State who may have been his parishioners when he served in some church in south Louisiana. I guess there were also 35 or 40 members of the clergy from near and far. Dinner across the fence was served a little later than usual and some guests who had attended the funeral were also there to break bread with us. I believe they were from New Iberia or some such place. One of the gentlemen seemed to be possessed of book learning and I made the most of his presence by asking him to set me straight about the spelling of two words whose spelling tripped up me, first, and then Natalie when she encountered them, spelled first one way and then another in a column I had sent her a week or two ago. The words were *garconniere* and *pigeoniere*. I am still ready to be corrected if this spelling is by a reputed authority turns out to be wrong. It seems odd to me, for example that if there are two n's in *garconniere*, there should be but one n in *pigeoniere* but the authority assured me that was the correct way to spell both words but he couldn't state why. In the several dictionaries I consulted on the spelling of the two words had neither of them listed.

both spelled w/ two "n"s.



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James called tonight to apologize for his brief or the briefness of his call yesterday. He said he had not been eating of late and failure to eat had increased his miserable physical feeling so that one thing increased the tendency of the other, -- starvation under-mining physical stamina and so it went. I understand the lady doctor had given him a terrible shock when she attended Kay before sending Kay to Shreveport. Some people feel the lady doctor inclines to be an alarmist until she is certain she has a patient well under control. It is possible her alarm is required to impress some people to the proper pitch. On the other hand, it is possible that she over-does it in cases where, as in the present instance, those immediately concerned over the health of the patient, are nearly knocked out by the message conveyed concerning the health of a member of the family.

Carmen called to give me a lengthy report on the presentation of the opera by the same name, Carmen, which she and Thelma had attended at the college on Friday night. She said it was well sung but some of the audience was taken aback when the curtains parted and it was discovered that several of the people on the stage were colored, the cast being a mixed one racially. As I had learned from Saturday's visitors, Miss Brown was indeed colored and somehow, she said, this seemed to be underlined because the actor to whom she made love was white. Everybody admired the way the whole opera was presented and the orchestra was exceptionally fine. It seems this particular opera company, -- I don't know its name, has several casts on the road and, according to Carmen, it just happened that the one booked for Hatchitoches was racially mixed. Since everybody survives the audience, I mean, I assume that this or that person who may later hear the same opera elsewhere may have had sufficient indoctrination so that they will be able to take it without too much surprise at the casting.

From what the radio has had to say about it, I take it that the weather in the neighborhood of Lyme has been on the chilly, inclement side all about Lyme during the weekend. I am holding the thought that little Miss Lee found a cozy corner indoors and has had an opportunity to indulge in a dab of relaxation and good cheer regardless of the blusteriness of the elements abroad.....

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Tuesday, November 12th, 1968.

Memorandum

Fair and frosty this morning, --29 degrees. Fair and chilly all day but cloudy tonight but no warmer. Fair and 60 promised for the morrow.

But how casual all this seems in contrast to weather reports out of Lyme tonight. I never did hear any of the commentators thus far mention the temperature readings in Lyme but there were lots of details about 80 mile winds, snow in the area and Heaven knows what all. I am holding the thought there is electric current and that little Miss Lee did not have to venture abroad today. I propose folding up early tonight to see if I can tune in on further particulars about the Lyme neighborhood.

The postman resumed his rounds this morning after his holiday of yesterday. The addition of Monday to his Sunday day of rest provided extra letters for distribution and I received several including at least one from Lyme, all of which are nestling snugly in the armoire against the morrow. Three secretaries put in appearances yesterday when their was no post but today none showed up at all when their services were needed twice as much.

At the moment I took my first breath after stepping out on the gallery this morning to realize that a freeze as well as a frost had passed this way during the night for while the frost will suffice to discourage the butterfly lilies from further blossoming, a freeze will effect their stalks and set the juice in the stems to entering upon some chemical process that permeates the air with an aroma, not exactly unpleasant but positive enough to guarantee the termination of the plants completely for the balance of the season.

Some of the banana plants were looking a little frustrated, too, but although sensitive to frosts, banana plants are a little more hardy than butterfly lilies and will usually stand up for a little while, that is a few days, after the lilies have collapsed.

I had a few 'phone calls today, one being from Mrs. Chopin who had been in New Orleans since Friday to spend the weekend with her daughter and grandchildren, a sister, some cousins and what not. She reported having had



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a very pleasant time while there but lots of rain both going and coming.

Today being Country Club, the gentlemen dined without ladies across the fence, save for Rosetta, the cook over yonder. It was a company of 8 or 9, I believe and quite jolly. They were primarily pecan gentlemen, --Natchitoches, Baton Rouge, Shreveport and so on. The son-in-law of J. H. Williams, whose name is Ralph Ingham or some such, sat between me or rather next to me and there was a great deal of talk about guineas for it seems he had brought a dozen or so in a crate from some lady up the road on the theory that J. H. Henry would want to buy some. Of course J. H. Henry said that I might want some and therefore I should be asked about same. Frankly, I don't need any guineas but J. H. kept talking about what excellent gumbo they make and whether there are a few more feathered friends about makes no difference to me. August got busy to see about providing some more roosting places for the new arrivals for I intend keeping them shut up for a while and when I went to give them some tea an hour later, they were all friendly and not at all afraid.

Because of the chilliness in the air, I was glad to come in out of the cold early this evening and I was glad I had received a recording in the mail of George Kennon's Memoirs of 1925 to 1950 or some such. I think he writes well which provides pleasure along with the instruction his things provide. I didn't go far with my initial effort but broke off when I got him as far as Prague and the invasion by the Nazis of that fair city which seems to be so much in the news of late.

Mr. Kennon remarked that it was impossible for him to mention the names of all the people who had meant much to him during his career in foreign affairs but remarked he could not omit mention of "Chips" Boland who had meant more than any other person to him over the years. Both Boland and Kennon were with Ambassador Bullitt in the Moscow Embassy where relations were established with Russia back in the days of F. D. R. Later Boland became the American Ambassador to Russia and then a little later Kennon was appointed to that post, both gentlemen had been acquainted with the Russian tongue at a time in American history when I suppose comparatively few Americans were acquainted with that tongue.

And now I must try my hand at extracting some news about the weather in Lyme as I hold the thought that little Miss Lee may be firmly housed against the night's rigors of the great out-of-doors.....

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15812

Wednesday, November 13th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and warmer. It was 29 at 7 o'clock this morning and 38 an hour later, continuing to climb into the upper 50's and tomorrow it will go 10 degrees higher, or at least so they say.

I found no difficulty in finding radio reports about the snow and windstorms all along the Atlantic coast last night but oddly enough, although the broadcasts in some instances were from Manhattan, not a word was said about conditions in the city itself but since all the geographic high points between South Carolina and Maine were pinpointed and especially the Jersey shore, one could conclude for himself how Gotham was getting it. They said this morning that although the velocity of the wind was lessening, the snow was still falling. I shall be impatient to learn how it all turned out.

I was enchanted to discover a happy combination of letters plus secretaries today. Somehow they go so well together.

The larger letter from Lyme, dated Friday, the 8th, was filled with fascinating particulars. The mention of marble gave me an especially pleasant sensation. It was so good that circumstances discouraged taking the trip mentioned and I am wondering if subsequent disturbances got in the general way of things. I can readily imagine with what pleasure the patient contemplated the natal day thoughts even though the festivities took place a little later for it is the thought most important although the marble cake has its particular place, too, in the general scheme of things.

Cane River  
Memoirs

I want to re-read every word written about the columns and ponder over the whole business a little, too. I must say it is remarkable how wonderfully well the copies come through. I am going to push further in the matter of completing the 1966 file of little Miss Lee's. I have no doubt we shall catch up with them eventually, what with resource or another toward which one may cast about.

It was a double dip to have the beautiful card under separate cover and to learn how things are progressing in the immediate neighborhood and how promising thing appears for the appearance of the home place, once the planting has been accomplished and another Spring breaks through to get the forth their greenery.

While I think of it, I want to mention how indebted I am for the information about Roan and her likeness in the National Geographic.



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Naturally it was of the greatest interest to have a pattern outlining the different segments of time during which the election returns were received. I find myself holding the thought that during the waking hours there were raids on the icebox to sustain the uncertainties during the waking hours and to give extra energy for sustaining hope along the ways for Leston. He never needs a national vote-counting bee to make him feel the need for food or drink but I must say the value and flavor of nourishment taken under the impatience to learn how things are mounting up seldom give much opportunity for appreciating the quality of what is being consumed. Accordingly, on the night of November 5th - 6th, the food in-take was relished the more, thanks to the failure of radio reception because of the static dominating the air waves on that occasion. Then, too, in Leston's case, he had better grab off returns as they issue forth from the broadcast studio since it seldom happens that there is ever an opportunity to run through the printed figures in the papers as one might like to do were that possible under one's own steam.

I am delighted with the sidelights and slips made during the excitement of tabulating the votes and the errors made by various electronic gadgets and I giggle every time I think of that remarkable dab of information little Miss Lee mentioned pertaining to the age of the senior Senator from Illinois whose age was so surprisingly elevated into the seven thousand year old bracket. "Figures don't lie" the old adage but that one certainly taxed one's credulity.

There were several pieces of mail in today's post which, coupled with yesterday's un-read items, gave my secretary quite a run for his money tonight. Celeste had mentioned this morning that the Hertzogs were coming up for tea around 5:30 this evening. --Dr. Ambrose Hertzog and wife of New Orleans his sister, Atala and some of the CaneRiver ones, that is, members of the clan, and expressed the hope I might be able to join them. I did not do so for the excellent reason that secretarial assistance showed up just then and provided me with an excellent excuse for not going although I should not have gone anyway.

I shall enclose a couple of notes in today's batch including, I think, the Shreveport Times editorial or article 10 days back about the statue of Uncle Jack, etc., etc.

Thanks to the post and little Miss Lee, it has

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Thursday, November 14th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair, contrary to predictions, and warmer in the 60's by day and in the 50's by night.

The enclosures speak for themselves with none of them having much to say although it is always good to hear from Esther and amusing to get a line from Mildred McCoy.

A couple of times I have asked Mrs. Walker who visited Esther for a weekend two or three years back to give me somenation as to Salt Meadow. She can describe something very well and others not at all and places are things falling quite beyond her potentials so far as description goes. From the enclosed letter of Esther, we at least learn there is view of Long Island sound from their place and that is something although not much more than something.

Her affliction, based on that unheard of combination of a virus and a bang has certainly been devastating and long lasting. Let's hold the thought the recuperation which has certainly been long and drawn out, may now be moving in the right direction and that her return to normalcy may be achieved quicker than the recuperation.

I must write her a note shortly and tell her about the local artist who has also been feeling puny of late. Celeste saw her yesterday or today and asked her what had been her health problem.

"The lady doctor say," she responded "that 'se got that Kong-kong misery."

I gather that her physician may have referred to the current influenza bug, said to have reached the United States from the Hong-kong area but Miss Hunter's geography is on the nebular side and, so far as she is concerned, it's all Kong-kong to her.

As for Mildred's problem, she might be said to be suffering from H-K problem although, in spite of identical initials, the Hong Kong and Harnet Kane maladies may not be a bit alike. I shall write to Mildred recommending that if the present letter gets her nowhere with Mr. Kane, she might try Martha Robinson of 27 Audubon Place, the Crescent City, since Martha used to be President of the



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Landmark Society and probably has enough energy to give the new President a push in the direction of that organization's business. For La Tyson's letter in long hand, it contains nothing of particular interest and therefore if you are pressed for time and feel impelled to consign it to the trash basket, you may do so in full assurance you have missed nothing of value.

If there is room, I shall enclose a couple of clippings which came to hand today from Mrs. Stirling. There was no letter with them. I think there is nothing of interest in the clippings either since it is quite probable you have had duplicates of these before this late date. --Pilgrimage stuff, I believe.

This afternoon, about 3, to the accompaniment of much loud talk that sent the cats whizzing around the end of the house and out of sight, Sister appeared in company with some man who seemed civilized enough. She said Doreatha's right breast had been removed but the left breast was alright. What she was doing down here, I do not know although she did say she wanted all the sub-surface artichokes I could dig for her because now and next week as she wants to make pickles out of them for J. H. and me, neither of whom, by the way, cares for same. She asked if we were still eating across the fence at dinner time. We were. She said she would come down and keep house for us if we only had a cook. I found that an altogether typical proposition. She shouted to her companion that they had to hurry up and be off as she had to get to town to see her sister-in-law, June, and off they went.

Last night I read some more from the George Kennon Memoires and found them to my liking. It had to do with the 1938 to 1941 years at the American Embassy in Berlin, his mission to Lisbon and mix-ups in Washington as between policy makers involving F. D. R. Secretary of War Stimson, Cordell Hull and 1944-45 in Moscow during the Harriman tenure as head of the Embassy. Among minor points about the situation in which the Americans found themselves as a result of the outbreak of the war seemed incredible was the fact that while the United States and the Nazis were rearranging an exchange of their diplomatic staffs, several months passed during which the Americans were kept incarcerated in some old hotel at Bad Nauheim or some place and the Nazis somewhere outside of Germany awaiting the exchanged and the American Government never would pay salaries to their diplomats during or after their incarceration because they weren't working which strikes me as both lousey and piggish, not to say incredible to boot.

I hold the thought the weather at Lyme is behaving better and that one is no longer snow-in.....

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Friday, November 15th, 1968.

Memorandum: The thermometer fluctuates modestly between the 50's and 60's but the balance of the day's weather was on the rampage. There was solid cloud coverage all morning while the radio announced tornado possibilities until 6:30 this evening but the rains came at 1 o'clock noon, --all three inches of them, and the winds blew and it got dark enough for automobiles to turn on their lights. By 3 o'clock, however, the tornado warnings were withdrawn and the rains stopped and lo! there was sunshine for the balance of the afternoon.

I trust little Miss Lee wasn't startled by the presence of two extra envelopes that will be cancelled for her in the same post with this memo. I didn't have a single envelope big enough to enclose the dozen sheets carrying the several issues of Plantation or Cane River Memo and so I used two instead of one, both of them being a little more sturdy than the usual envelopes.

In sending these along, I am doing so with some misgivings since I am not sure they are really the ones missing from the Lyme file. In little Miss Lee's next to the last letter, I believe she mentioned the ones she did not have to hand were those dating from July 29th to October 7th, 1966. I asked three secretaries, each at times when others weren't present and each gave me the same dates, July 29th to October 7th, 1966, --and I put that on the 1966 for what reason I cannot imagine, perhaps because I am a little uncertain about the date for the 1966 days of the on which the newspapers for those weeks and months are printed do not seem to harmonize with anything having to do with July 29th to October 7th. Perhaps this is because there was some change as from Thursday to Sunday along about this time.

All I hope is that the columns going forward in this mail in two additional envelopes may be the missing ones but if they are not, just let me know and I shall see if I may do better in my next effort.

And if the above and endless paragraph seems hopelessly confused, just charge it off to two interruptions by the telephone, each interruption lasting about forty minutes which left me after each break-in, somewhat uncertain as to what I had



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covered and what I had not. James called first to report that Kay and la Crabtree returned from Shreveport and that tonight James and the ladies are staying at 209 South Williams but why this should be so, I do not know and did not ask, of course. Perhaps because there is more room there, la Crabtree finds it easier to look after the patient. I got the impression Kay had asked James to call me with a view to enjoying a little chat but at the out-set, suspecting as much, I had remarked I was slow in answering the 'phone because I was just terminating an appointment with my shower, a lie which I set forth simply because at the sound of James' voice, and in view of the lateness of the hour, I assumed Kay might have asked him to establish contact as he happened on other occasions and I sensed I could indulge in chit-chat as well on the morrow. I asked James about his book and was pleased to learn it will be on the market forthwith. He inquired about the artist and was surprised to learn she had been suffering from Hong-kong disease. Well, come to think of it, who in the world wouldn't be surprised at such a piece of intelligence.

A sentence or two after that conversation, Mrs. Chopin called. She had had luncheon with Mrs. Rowe of the local paper who told her that Charles Cunningham is writing Mrs. Walker long letters because he doesn't want her to think that he had anything to do with the delay that resulted in the memorial to Mr. Walker not being erected before Mrs. Walker's departure for Florida at which time she took the memorial, intended for the local hospital, when she departed. There were quite a few bits of gossip of no more interest than that morsel and that is that for tonight, I trust. I think I may depend on the Delfin kids to keep the lines tied up for the balance of the night.

Answering the inquiry regarding the classifying of the columns as to subject matter, it might be helpful to keep in mind some general arrangement of the ultimate book itself. Perhaps some title for such a book might be kept in mind, something like "Plantation World of Leston" or some such. After an introduction the various columns could follow, using one or more column in progressive order, feathered friends, flowers, furred friends, gourds, gardening and so on making selections of columns from the various columns falling within one category or another. Buildings, churches, plantation homes and so on would find their places in such a set-up, I should think and I shall touch upon all this shortly in a subsequent memo.

May there be time taken out for rest and relaxation along the way, never letting the labors on the column dominate one's activities.....

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Sunday, November 17th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Saturday fair with three quarters of an inch of rain around midnight, followed by fair, mid 60-ish temperature for the balance of the day.

Somehow I let myself get engineered into an outing on Sunday as from 2:45 in the afternoon to 8:45 tonight when we journeyed three quarters of the way to town to the plantation home of the Jarved Pratts to see slides, as I understood it, as taken by Carter Edwards on his European trip, especially to the Grand Trianon, a couple of years ago. His slides were perfectly wonderful and I enjoyed every minute of his performance BUT the show didn't end there and on we went without a minute's pause, not even long enough to turn on the lights for a few seconds, and Lull Hankins who is not an artist, took up the entertainment to show pictures he had made on the recent trip with the local folks to the West Indies and thence to Calcutta, Benares, Delhi and so on. For those participating in the island and the round the world jaunt, it may have been interesting but I found it a little on the dreary side, "this motel where we stopped, -- I don't remember in what country" "This view from the hotel lobby but I forget which city, etc., etc., ad infinitum. Some of these global pictures were so dark, people had difficulty identifying the people in them but I had no difficulty at all since I made the most of the opportunity present to rest my eyes, regretting only that I did not have an upholstered chair for the 4 or 5 hour sitting.

Nothing lasts for ever, of course, and finally and at long last, the lights were turned on and food was served and mighty good it was, too. I don't know how many people were gathered together, perhaps 25, and I had the good fortune to sit with Carter Edwards who told me many interesting things about his European trip and especially things about Versailles.

He said that Barbara Hutton is putting up twenty five million dollars for doing decorating of the Queen's apartments which sounds like a great deal of money but that any money at all is being advanced is something for which we can be grateful....

Carter said that he was given to understand that the staircase of the Ambassadors was to be put back and that the



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model was shown him. I should like to think this is true but I doubt it since it would require not only lots of money to do the job but at the same time it would mean the tearing out of some of the exquisite rooms built under Louis XV that are treasures in themselves. we shall see what we shall see.

I was interested in his estimate of the cost of the drapes of a single in that series of apartments, --the Queen's" running from the Queen's staircase along the south side of the "enveloppe" to the Salon de la Paix at the beginning of the Galerie des Glaces. He thought the height of each of these many windows would be about 45 feet, requiring yards for each single length of brocade, each window requiring about 6 widths. The gold braid and the usual gadgets, not to mention the linings, etc., would be additional, of course. I guess one would need to have a Woolworth pocketbook to contemplate such an undertaking but it is good to learn such expenditures are being undertaken from that quarter.

So much for Sunday afternoon and evening further up the river. Saturday night down the river in this area was something else when Miss Hunter's daughter, Jackie, for the second time in as many years, shot her "helper", Paul Metoyer, but not too expertly. Last time, she had, according to my informant on that occasion, "shot him through the window", -- she being inside, he attempting to come in. On this go-round she "winged him" through the leg and he was taken to Confederate Memorial hospital in Shreveport.

Paul is an excellent workman but has the poor habit of going off his rocker occasionally and at such times presents difficulties.

He had been working for more than a year for the Reverend Fathers at the church across the way but Father Fredericks had fired him a couple of weeks ago when he told Paul to find something to do and Paul couldn't think of anything. Customarily in this area, one points out to servants what is to be done but in Father Fredericks home town of Pittsburgh, the customs are probably different. And so Paul lost his job and Jackie, always a little on the flighty side, took a pot shot at him and that added entertainment to the local Saturday night.

I never did see anybody on Saturday to pick up the artichokes which had been dug on instructions from Sister who was to pick them up or have her son do so on Saturday. The artichokes were accordingly consigned to the icebox, awaiting the lady's pleasure at some future, --distant future, I trust.....

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Monday, November 19th, 1966.

Memorandum:

Fair on the chilly side with a promise of a freeze for tonight/

While I think of it, let me say that there may be no memo sent out in this coming Thursday's mail but it will follow in Friday's out-going post. The reason for this withholding action on my part stems from a somewhat curious circumstance that seems the more odd the more I consider it. The local clerk is also the local Post Master. He has been summoned for jury duty this coming Thursday. There is no assistant Post Master in the local set-up. It is generally understood in this region that if a person called for jury duty has some good excuse preventing him from responding to the jury call, he may advise the judge who will excuse him from serving, if the reason for the anticipated absence seems good.

R. B. is the judge in this instance and the clerk, as a matter of course, took up the matter with R. B., explaining why it would be difficult for him to absent himself from the post office on the grounds that there is no assistant and that J. H., being retired from the post, cannot serve for a day in the clerk's place. R. B., to the clerk's surprise, said that was insufficient as a reason for requesting he be excused. J. H. could not understand R. B. taking such a stand and got in touch with him to go into the matter further but R. B. remained adamant. Then Pat was asked to explain the situation to R. B. and Pat did so and got no where.

It seems the Federal law requires the Post Office to be open across the country at regular regulation hours while some other law, -- State law, I suppose, requires a person summoned for jury duty, present himself on the appointed day. Hence the impasse.

Everybody seems to feel that R. B. is making a mountain out of a molehill and doing nobody, and especially himself at next election time, no good. In the mean time, I have no doubt the mails will run as usual but as it is uncertain as to how and by whom the out-going post will be handled, it seems to me that I might do well to withholding whatever I have to hand until the following day when things will be back to normal, one assumes.

Tonight's radio gives me to understand that after



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ten long weeks of school strike by the teachers, the New York children may expect to find their schools functioning again on the morrow. I should hope so. I haven't been able to keep abreast with all the scufflings going on in this matter but I gather the difficulty is to be found in some Brooklyn segment, heavily populated by Porto Ricans and other colored groups. It seems to me that the Porto Ricans are frequently accused of being the cause of many difficulties, especially racial, in the New York area. Perhaps Mr. Nixon who seems to know his way around in the West Indies, may be able to look in on Porto Rico and find out what is biting the former and present inhabitants of that neighborhood.

I spent quite a bit of time in the garden today and was surprised to find how much there was to be eliminated and how many things remain that can be used. We had some mustard greens and looked and tasted like the first crop of the season, so redolent of color and so juicy. I am casting about to see if I can find someone who would like some young turnips for at present, in spite of the recent cold snap, as though they had reached the ideal state of development, what with the leaves being still tender for greens and the bottoms about the size of a chicken egg. Few people seem to prepare turnips by cooking both the tops and bottoms together but it seems to me they are perfect together if properly handled in the cooking. The peppers continue holding out against the cold and the collards are just entering into their proper state for the table. I rounded up a flock of pumpkins and squash today, too, some nice round yellow pumpkins and some dark green squash, more elliptical than globe-like. When Doreatha gets back from Shreveport, she will be wanting to make us some pumpkin pies, I am sure.

On the Natchitoches front, I learned today that Cousin Arthur is adding a new member to his law firm, a gentleman who is a son-in-law of B. and Gordon Randolph of Kateland plantation. I assume the wife of this lawyer must be the "baby" in that famous line of Bee Randolph, -- "the lady what had the baby". It seems to me that baby was born about 1945 since it was about then that Dr. Rand had to say goodbye to Miss Cam one afternoon while here in order to slide down to Colfax in anticipation of the arrival of the stork at Bee and Gordon's house. And so, after all these years, the baby has grown to maturity, having married a young lawyer from Crowley along the way and is now going to set up housekeeping in Natchitoches. It will be nice having them in the Parish for themselves at least because it will provide the Randolphs for coming up this way more frequently.

Tom and Tentom are banging the screendoor to say they would enjoy a saucer of warm milk while I am ready for a dab of chocolate milk and a slab of pound cake.....

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Tuesday, November 19th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and freezey, at least last night it "hoovered" around 30 under fair skies. Today's sun didn't warm things up much and it will be frosty in the morning, it is said.

It was such a pleasant surprise to find the likeness of such a pretty bird in today's post. I had not expected a note so soon and accordingly was both surprised and enchanted. I am glad you have been finding things midtown during the past week and that circumstances were providing an opportunity to make another round on Monday interruption.....

Mildred McCoy just gave me a buzz. She says there was a letter about Uncle Jack in Sunday's Natchitoches paper, the one that went forward to Lyme by this morning's post. She wanted to tell me, too, that she had not received any response from Harvett Kane but assumed he had not as yet received it since she had not as yet received the returned signed receipt which she had requested on mailing her letter to him.

She must be busy as a hen a-settin', what with all the projects she is fussing about with from trips to various cities in the State on museum projects and to social festivities she is cooking up such as a supper this coming Saturday night for 80 people at the museum, a supper that will feature all kinds of plantation fare, the mere enumeration of the menu making me exhausted to contemplate.

I am enclosing a couple of clippings from Sunday's Times Picayune. The larger one about Winter Quarters may have been covered in its story by other clippings coming to hand over the past year. I had forgotten that it was the same Mr. Macdonald who developed the tulip gardens near Newellton who had acquired and was refurbishing the former home of Dr. Haller Nutt. From the account appearing in this clipping, it would appear a lot of valuable data has been gathered together for this museum.

The other clipping from the pen of Pie Duour is a review of some medical book which appears to cover a flock of particulars about gunshot wounds in the stomach neighborhood. So many medical books leave most readers cold but this one sounds as though it might be entertaining even for the layman.



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This morning I had a call from New Orleans from somebody who asked if I could supply the European address of I. S. Willard. The lady seemed to know me but I couldn't place her although it might possibly have been some kind of an associate of Mrs. Edgar B. Stern but why she should have gone to the trouble to search for an unlisted phone number to ask something about I. S. W., I cannot imagine. But, on second thought, although I can't think why, I suppose it is quite possible that I. S. W. may have left my number with any one of a dozen people living any old place in the United States or even abroad. The only address I had to offer was the American Express in Paris, 11 rue Scribe, but whether I. S. W. is there or in Sweden, Denmark, Germany or any old place is anybody's guess. Perhaps we shall be hearing from her before long and if the cancellation mark isn't too smudged, we may be able to guess something as to her whereabouts from that. I must remember that a post card showing a scene from one place doesn't mean necessarily that it was posted from there. --not after the time I received one once from I. S. W. carrying a likeness of the State capitol of Baton Rouge but cancelled from Naples or some such place in Italy.

I sat up rather later than usual last night to finish the Kennon Memoires. The reason I sat up was that I didn't feel sleepy until I got up and began reading when I fell asleep before I had finished the first side of the disc I had turned on. And so I went back and began all over again and finally finished what I had undertaken.

The latter part of the volume is given over to various reports in which Kennon gave considerable space to analyzing the political set-up in Russia during the war years and although excellently done, they are handled with such carefulness of phraseology that the offer a study rather than a narration of Soviet thinking which is certainly a little on the puzzling side. He even goes to some trouble to explain that in view of the fact that few if any of the Kremlin boys have any concept of other nations in the world outside of Russia and it is almost impossible for outsiders to comprehend the Soviet mental gymnastics.

I turned on my radio at 5 o'clock this evening to get the weather which I did but it turned out that the station I was on was not in Louisiana but Colorado. In summer and during the long days, I cannot get Denver until 10 or 11 o'clock at night but for some strange reason I can get it during the daylight hours at this season of the year. There are so many things I need to learn aside from senseless when, as at present, I am hungry.....

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Wednesday, November 20th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with another frost last night and the promise of another for tonight.

There was much confidential telephone talking on the party line today by several ladies figuring in the dickering going on about the purchase of the house in town where Leston Prudhomme once lived before Miss Julie Prudhomme inherited it. Three of the ladies, anticipating a board member assembly tomorrow morning, met with their lawyer, Cousin Arthur today to consult about the possibilities. All present agreed to say nothing about the gathering so that the balance of the ladies, including my neighbor across the fence, go into session on the morrow. Of course none of those present could scarcely wait until they could rush home to their telephones and begin talking to Heaven knows how many people including one person on the Cane River line, each stressing the point that I was the only person being made a confidant of the doings. My guess the news was widely spread within the hour following the termination of the meeting.

Cousin Arthur advised them to buy the place. Somebody suggested that since the lot is a deep one, the ladies might off some of it to reduce the purchase price but Cousin Arthur advised them to hang on to the whole property.

Another lady remarked that the entire upper floor of the house was jammed with fine old heirlooms which might be expected to go with the house and that these antiques could be disposed of at private or public sale, a move which Cousin Arthur thought might provide sufficient money to put the house itself in order. Off hand, unless the ladies already have lots of furniture, it would seem to me the heirlooms should be retained to furnish the place, once it has been acquired.

Cousin Arthur went to some pains to underline the fact that this piece of property had nothing to do with



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the property, half a mile or so away, on which the organization Colonial Hatchitoches, which is the site of the fort on which Cousin Arthur's late brother expended some attention. Cousin Arthur reported that the Prudhomme house could be purchased by the Hysterical Ladies and put in ship-shape fashion by them with their funds while the fort will be handled by the Colonial Hatchitoches group or whatever it is called and may be reconstructed with a grant from the Federal Government. This seems like a somewhat broad assumption since, I assume, the impending Nixon Administration isn't very likely to look with favor on such project, --certainly no with the same blessing the previous Democratic Administrations have smiled on such undertakings.

I suppose I shall hear about all this from across the fence, following tomorrow's board meeting. It will, of course, be all news to me.

It was nice finding the letter from Helen Guin in today's post. I must say Esther's affliction falls into the strangest category imaginable. I have no idea of the time it takes any form of influence to run its course but this one, stretching from July through November seems mighty lengthy.

I'm making the most of our current days of sunshine to gather the okra stalks, tying them up in bundles and suspending them from the rafters of the Yucca gallery so the pods may finish drying, now that Jack Frost has knocked out their sap system for this season.

Last night I digested the October 18th issue of Look and found one or two of the articles, --those dealing with the Chicago convention reading just about as confusing as I found the radio accounts of the doings when the business was in full swing. I gather from last night's reading that many people, especially the younger ones, were vastly distressed that neither major party gave the electorate any choice about voicing their preferences for the candidates named by the two parties. I suppose this is so, --just as it always has been. I still don't understand how all of a sudden the youngsters got so warmed up about the whole thing and why they carried on so outrageously at Chicago but scarcely made a peep during the Miami doings. Perhaps there is no simple explanation to clarify all this. One thing is certain, so far as I am concerned, it still remains a mystery to

I have heard nothing further about the jury duty for the clerk on the morrow and so I assume I shall be withholding memo to go forward by Saturday's post.....

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Thursday, November 21st, 1968.

Memorandum:

Continued fair and cool, sort of 35 to 55.

I was perfectly enchanted to find Tuesday's letter from Lyme, even as little Miss Lee had hoped, in today's post.

I sent nothing out today but hope I may do so on the morrow. The clerk came down early this morning but took himself back to town a little after 8 o'clock and, so far as I know, the merchant-planter took over for the balance of the day. I do not know if this jury thing goes on again tomorrow but am holding the thought it may not.

In yesterday's memo I had intended to mention that Life had arrived a day later than usual this week and that I was impatient to get into it to see what would be said about the gentleman, Mr. Douglas, whose portrait appeared on the front cover. I had turned rather rapidly through the issue while on my way to Yucca from the Post Office and had been able to make out the title or at least one word of a title having in something to do about slavery. I also noticed the full page portrait of what I took to be a fine looking lady, only to learn subsequently that the lady was a gentleman whom John Quincy Adams had represented before the Supreme Court in the ante bellum period.

With such advance inspection I was "all set" to delve deeply into the business to hand and in just the right frame of mind to take up the other material mentioned in little Miss Lee's letter, --the David Snell article and particulars about the picture maker which I had not as yet encountered. How right is little Miss Lee that such a producer should have his attention called to the story of Jallon.

From all that was reported about the latter, one cannot doubt he really must be just grand and I have marked the article to call it to the attention of the Squire the next time I see him or whenever he telephones. I had thought I might see him before this late date for I had asked him to 'phone me as to



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the progress his wife is making but I suppose he has been on the busy side concentrating his attention in that direction.

I did not see my 9 o'clock coffee companion today as she was to be in town by 9:30 to attend the board meeting. I went across the fence at the accustomed noon hour and although I caught a glimpse of her, it was only a glimpse since she had come home to put on another costume and hurry off to some luncheon or party or something, leaving J. H. and me to dine by ourselves. As she was going out, I heard him say that he would buy the Lestan Prudhomme house if she wanted it but she quite peevishly said that it was not she but the Association of Hysterical Ladies who wanted it and that was all of the exchanged of words. Naturally I started table conversation on another line, knowing full well that Carmen would call me during the afternoon to give an account of the board meeting. This she did and reported that the ladies had voted to acquire the property if satisfactory arrangements could be made and I suppose that effort will be taken up forthwith. Carmen reported that Sudie Lawton who is a member of the board, made quite a racket about something having nothing to do about the Prudhomme house but rather some kind of criticism of something about the October Pilgrimage but Carmen was interrupted and I never did establish contact with her again.

Today's sunshine was so nice and warm, I enjoyed working out of doors, where I devoted sometime to gathering stalks of the green okra which grew in the same patch with several rows of the red variety. I want to get them properly sorted in order to see if the green variety takes any coloring from the red and if the red shows any coloring from its proximity to the green. So many requests keep coming to hand for seeds of the red that I am anxious to harvest as much of the pure red as I can.

For some reason, -- I suppose it is the shortness of the daylight hours, I am finding it more and more impossible to get clear reception from distant stations and almost impossible to tune in close ones such as Shreveport. I have been hearing so much from the ether waves during the past 24 hours that I feel Charlie having painted himself into a financial corner while the United States, Germany and England are trying to rescue the francs about which he was so disagreeable 6 or 7 months back.....

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Friday, November 22nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 50 -70 range.

A splendid mail to hand in today's post in the form of a nice fat envelope from Lyme, bubbling over with all sort of delightful particulars plus an enclosure in the form of data regarding Jallen.

Where and how can I begin to express my thanks.

The first item read covered particulars regarding the spelling of those words having to do with pavillions found in many an old Louisiana garden, separate, octagonal buildings usually, designed for the boys and the pigeons. That they should be spelled as they are and with such an unexpected feminine ending for the boys and the masculin for the birds I find at once puzzling and hilarious. Even as Henry Adams, so I, too, seem to be spending a lifetime in trying to get an education and am no closer to arriving at that stage than was H. Adams, esquire, after so many years of effort.

I must say I was impressed by all the remarkable things mentioned regarding the doings of the big wind in the Lyme neighborhood. What with the vast weight of the great bridges, it seems almost incredible that they, like teen agers at a ball, should be swinging and swaying in the breeze. As for the timbers being tossed skyward on buildings under construction, one could imagine that a little more readily although one would suppose such material would be tightened into place almost the moment they were pushed into place, as they probably are, but scarcely made solid against such a blow. As for such high tides tossing the ferry boats around, that must be exceptional, too. I, for one at least, never heard of such a predicament for commuters. I do recall having been aboard a big liner, accommodating 2 or 3 thousand passengers, on Lake Erie during a storm and I was impressed at that time that the doings of the boat exceeded anything I ever witnessed on the stormy Atlantic in a winter's gale.

Praise the Lord that little Miss Lee was not abroad when the town was getting such a raking at the time the things were sailing around at such a great rate.

I am so grateful for particulars regarding the musical outi



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I find it remarkable that the same two musical offerings were being presented on the same night and in such close proximity, the one to the other. I have heard of plays by the same author being presented at the same time in several theatres, as, for instance, it seems to me there was one season during which five plays by Noel Coward were packing the houses at the same time but on that occasion, if memory serves, there were a couple playing in London and three in New York which certainly placed some of the playhouses quite a distance apart.

I posted the Wednesday and Thursday Memoranda in today's out-going mail, handing them to the clerk before he took off for court at 8 o'clock this morning, after he had driven down here quite early to lend a hand at getting the plantation going before R. B. tapped the gavel in town for the case being tried got under way. There were several letters along with the one from Lyme in today's post but circumstances prevented me from reading any of them. This noon while at dinner across the fence, something was said by the merchant-planter about Lloyd and his wife and children coming down this afternoon to spend the night. I did not see them but after dark I had a 'phone call from my hostess of this noon, saying her husband had just now told her that the Shreveport contingent was not arriving until tonight. She asked me if I would put lights on in the garden and the big house. My secretary, just back from some football game over many way was just finishing the letter from Lyme and I dismissed him and went to see about getting some lights going. Before I had finished doing so, Lloyd's wife and two children appeared. They had arrived in a car by themselves and Lloyd was coming later with a man and his wife and the whole posse were planning to have dinner in the big house and I was asked to light all the heaters, upstairs and down, including 2 bathrooms upstairs, the upstairs sitting room, three bedrooms, etc., and the downstairs rooms through which seemed like quite a housewarming so late and especially with a dinner to be prepared after their arrival. Off hand, I should think the library, for instance, would draw much attention at such hour. What with things as they are across the fence and no cook at the big house, the whole idea on it is particular weekend seems quaint, to say the least.

I did learn that Doreatha's is likely to be hospitalized a while longer. Your reference to another case brought back so many thoughts of little Miss Lee's concern along parallel lines, --and the experience of one who meant so much.....

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Sunday, November 24th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 70's on Saturday, an inch of rain last night with blue skies today in the 60's and a pretty new moon tonight.

More people came for the weekend than I had supposed but I don't know how many. Only Lloyd's wife, Marguerite, and couple of the children were all I saw on Friday night and I saw Lloyd yesterday morning and last night but none of the others although I had passed by the big house a couple of times Saturday. Lloyd said the people were the same ones who came down to weekend at the camp during the summer or whenever and only one or two others who had never been here before. During the day I did notice two station wagons and a sedan at the side gate and I suppose that provided all the transportation required. I am still in the dark as to how Doreatha is making out at the Confederate Memorial in Shreveport. I was told by Marguerite that her arm hasn't been doing as well as the hospital had expected and she didn't know how long she would be there. Lloyd's attention was called to the artichokes in the ice box of the big house that mother had said he would take to her when he was down here. He said their cars were so full of people and luggage that he would not take them when they left on Saturday night but that he would pick them up on Monday when he brought Doreatha home. Like everything by way of information concerning Doreatha, these two impressions didn't exactly jibe. Today Celeste told me that Marguerite mentioned to her and J. H. on Saturday night while waiting for the others to arrive here that Sister had kept Confederate Memorial in an uproar, jumping in and out to see Doreatha to such a point that Doreatha was unhappy because the hospital staff were annoyed that they were being put through the mill at such a great rate by that woman popping in and out to see her. It's remarkable how strictly according to Hoyle the old, old pattern follows through, no matter the time, place or circumstance.

Mildred McCoy just called me to say that the letter she had written to the Natchitoches Times appears



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in today's paper, --the letter about some of her neighbors in the Marco area from whose old house came the Robert McAlpin cotton stencil, discovered in the sur-surface of the fireplace when the house was being torn down. I think I mentioned she had written a letter touching on that family. I suppose my paper will not get through the mail to this bend of the river for another day or so, after which it will go forward promptly.

I had rather expected to hear from both the squire and Natalie this weekend but I didn't. I am especially anxious to hear how the squire's wife is doing but I refrain from phoning 209 South where I believe she is staying and I get no answer from 406. I sent a column to Natalie on Friday and thought she might call me about one or two minor matters in it. I suppose it is quite probable she did not receive it by Saturday's post, especially if, as in the case of a previous communication, it was delivered, not as addressed to the house, but to her husband's office instead.

I did some more reading from Herbert Muller's "Loom of History" last night. It's a book I would recommend to nobody since it contains so much material, some what encyclopaedic in nature, about people and places of Asia Minor that very likely would be of scant interest to anyone except scholars especially concerned with the people, places and early civilizations touched upon in it. But at the same time I find it instructive, even though I know mighty little about what I am reading. I am especially happy to find several paragraphs about the Asia Minor city of Pergamum or however that city spelled its name. For some reason, what little I have heard of that place always delighted me. I gather one may still see quite enough after all these centuries to give some notion as to its original layout. I was sorry to learn that a part of its famous altar to Zeus and many of the statues early in this century were removed to Berlin and got smashed up during the destruction of that place in the 1940's. There's a surprisingly long article about Saint Paul, --Saul of Tarsus, --that gives a slant on his contribution to Christianity that ought to make some readers sit up and take notice.

Much more to chatter about but the bottom of the page approacheth as the night advanceth and so I shall break off, hoping it was a peaceful day in Lyme.....

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Monday, November 25th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 50's.

It was so nice to find a letter from Lyme in today's post and I only regret that little Miss Leefelt impelled to hop, skip and jump to get it off regardless of all the swirl of commercial affairs that must have made trying to write personal communications when, as is invariably so at such time, one has to struggle under considerable tension.

I am holding the thought that she didn't let the matter of a difference in a single digit, as, for example, the difference between 1965 and 1966 upset her. Lucky are all of us if we never find anything more than a mere difference of one unit pop up in the general scheme of things. I am thinking at the moment of all the talk elicited by the fact that one unit brought about in the birthdate of Miss Cam who sometimes set it down as 1871 and sometimes as 1872, -- and the fact that official the date of her death was November 17th but was chiseled on her gravestone as November 18 which was the date of her funeral and I can't see for the life of me what difference it makes in the general scheme of things.

I shall immediately set about looking for the missing column and may be I shall have as much luck in tracking them down for 1965 as I did for 1966. I, myself, do not have a file for if I had had one, I should have long since have drawn from it to replace the missing items and most gladly. But every once in a while I discover one person or another who has chanced to save some of the missing issues and undoubtedly we shall be able to fill in the gap from such sources. I receive only one issue of each publication and I am always delighted to be able to pass that along to you know whom. I shall call the publisher on the morrow, asking that two instead of one copies be sent me in order that an extra one may be available in emergencies. In the mean time, I shall be holding the thought that little Miss Lee will not be giving a second thought to this matter for I feel quite confident that the missing ones may be rounded up sooner or later and Heaven knows there is no time pressure in this matter.



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I may add by way of explanation about not having a file that I did keep and still have quite a few newspapers, The Enter-  
prise, covering some years prior to and perhaps a few into the  
1960's. When the bombshell exploded around that time when Dan  
at the insistence of his wife, engineered the idea of getting the  
family to put the place on the market, I was so aghast at all  
the plunder in papers I had gathered together over the years, that  
I immediately began cutting down the ever-mounting accumulation  
which automatically knocked a hole in the files that had been gathered.

It was a pleasant surprise this morning when, on answering the  
phone, I heard Doreatha's voice, calling from her house.  
She said she came down from Shreveport yesterday and was going  
back for a check-up on Wednesday, feeling so happy to be back home again  
a few days. She hopes, of course, that she may be able to re-  
turn immediately after the check-up.

In the mean time, --smile, --the much talked about  
ground artichokes that Sister had ordered ten days back or so, are  
still cluttering up the icebox since Lloyd did not take them with  
him this past weekend but preferred to pick them up today  
when he brought Doreatha back home, little guessing, of  
course, that the hospital would let her out a day before Lloyd  
thought he would bring her.....interruption --Carmen.

And what Carmen had to say on the 'phone was long and involved,  
including a couple of endless letters from one of her nieces in  
California sending messages to me, etc., etc.

Carmen want to tell me about Mr. Durr, too.  
Mr. Durr bought the Leopold-Joe Levy plantation store in  
Hatchitoches during the past year. He and his wife have some grown child  
who do not live in this area. The senior Durrs have a house somewhere  
in town and as they both adore flowers, have a pretty garden behind their  
residence. Mrs. Durr went to Shreveport this past weekend to  
see a relative and Mr. Durr was at home alone. On  
Sunday morning somebody had met Mr. Durr in the Post Office and  
enjoyed ushko a please chat with him. In the afternoon he had gone  
to sit in a favorite chair in his garden. One or two people had phoned  
him Sunday afternoon but assumed he was out. On the dawn of a new day, --  
morning, he did not appear at the store. Some one inquired about  
him but no one knew where he had gone. Then somebody went to the  
home and got no response to knocking and, on going around  
to the garden side of the house, they found Mr. Durr comfortably sitting  
in his favorite garden chair, but dead. The physician who  
was summoned believed he must have died amidst his favorite surroundings  
Sunday afternoon, remaining there in his favorite spot until  
Monday morning.

There were people here this afternoon from New Orleans and  
Alexandria, Virginia, lovely people, and I lost time but I'll catch up  
on desk work right now.....

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Tuesday, November 26th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 60's.

Having briefly disposed of the weather in the  
above line, I stopped to answer the 'phone. Natalie  
was calling in regard to a column. I had written  
something about seasonal health problems and she found it  
to her liking. I forget the title of the thing, --"Seasonal  
Distempers" or some such in which I somehow managed  
without trying to drag inla Hunter, Essae Mae, Lyle, Celine --  
and two or three other people whose identity I have since  
forgotten. Come to think of it, I even got in  
Florence Reed, possibly spelled Reid, who used to be  
popular on Broadway. I remember her with special clarity  
in a production called "The Shanghai Gesture" in which  
she played the role of "Mother D God-damn" the dominant  
personality in an Oriental Night Club.

Natalie seemed to be feeling fine but our con-  
versation was of short duration, what with the  
Delfin kids and the J. C. Modye youngsters, both  
families being on this party like, were in such a boisterous  
mood as to make communication of dubious pleasure.  
The kids are really getting a break this week, what with a  
couple of schoolteacher conventions in progress as of  
this week Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and the schools  
accordingly closed for those three days, and Thursday and Friday  
being Thanksgiving Day holiday. One doesn't expect  
to be able to make a call after 3 o'clock any day when  
school is in session since the kids are home at that  
hour and take over the Bell system from then on  
until 11 or 12 o'clock midnight but with a solid  
week of no school, they are really making the most of  
the time that is all theirs around  
the clock.

I asked her if she had any news of the Registers. She  
said she had not seen them but that her husband had  
chatted for a few minutes with James one day last week when  
he had bumped into him at some food em-  
porium. I suppose James may have tired to get  
me on the 'phone but was unable to break through the  
Delphin barrier.



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Mrs. Chopin called me this noon. I suppose even the party-liners have to relinquish the 'phone for a few minutes to eat. She said she had tried to get me last night but ran into busy signals all evening. Her eldest son, Mat. Junior, arrived from Ohio, with his new wife, Joan for a few days visit. He had in mind taking his wife down the river so she might visit the BayouFolks Museum where as a girl, Mrs. Chopin lived and then to drop in for a little visit at this bend of the river. We set a tentative date for Wednesday afternoon but whether this will work out, I don't know, what with the weather man predicting showers for the morrow and touring plantation gardens in the rain leaves something to be desired.

Mrs. Chopin said she was so glad she had reached me because she was dying to tell somebody the error she had made while talking with her son and daughter-in-law which had filled her with shame-facedness. Her son's first wife's name was Peggy of whom Mrs. Chopin was very fond. The second wife, Joan was talking animatedly with Mrs. Chopin on their arrival last night when Mrs. Chopin nearly collapsed when she realized she had just called her Peggy.

While at the store today, there was a call came through for me on that wire which is not a party line. Somebody from Dallas was calling to ask if an appointment could be made for three bus loads of ladies who were planning to "do" the Cane River country during the Thanksgiving holiday. Needless to say, my response was in the negative and very firmly. Then I was asked if I could arrange to have the ladies of the Church of the Children of Strangers serve a country style dinner for 97 people who would be in the Dallas party. I told the person who was calling that contact should be made directly with the Reverend Fathers but that I doubted if anything could be achieved, especially during this holiday season. Nobody pays much attention to Thanksgiving in this area but even so, I cannot imagine that just because the ladies served food at Pilgrimage time, they would undertake putting on such a thing at the present time. I used to wonder what ladies in Dallas with time on their hands thought other people had to do besides standing on their heads for them but a long time ago, of course, I realized that discontented ladies, forever anxious to be going anywhere, simply don't think.

The postal boys will be having a vacation on Thursday, I suppose, and accordingly Wednesday's memo will not be going forward until Friday. I am holding the thought "turkey day" may be a happy one in Lyme.....

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Wednesday, November 27th, 196

Memorandum:

Sort-a 50-ish and damp. It began sprinkling before dawn, increased its intensity during the morning, slackened occasionally and then increased the downpour. Tonight it has gone back to sprinkling and the tempo of the breeze is increasing. As of now, my rain gadget records five inches.

As I learned a long time ago, weather of dry kind never discourages pilgrims even if they are friends. Mrs. Chopin called this morning to ask if it was pretty damp down this way. I told her it was. She said her two sisters from New Orleans had come up to spend Thanksgiving and so join Mrs. Chopin's son and his wife and they were wondering if it too drippy down this way for a visit. I suggested all five of them invest in waterwings and come along if they cared to and they did come but without the waterwings and so waded in H2 O above their ankles but didn't seem dis-spirited by their experience. They even braved the young lake covering the Ghana garden to make the journey over to the little cabin to see the Hunter murals. I was wearing boots enabling me to feel sorry for them and their lack of good judgement and the re ruination of the foot-gear.

I mention all this gloominess of the weather and the trapping about in the rain as proof of what power an envelope of sunshine will do for one in making the whole world in spite of the downpour, to make everything bright and gay. What I am talking about, of course, is the perfectly lovely message, penned on an equally lovely greeting card, arriving from Lyme in today's post. All the sundry prizes from the garden and especially the nice big fat pumpkin in the design, could form such a promise of gladness that I found on turning the page and discovering such a touching message from little Miss Lee's true hand. It didn't matter to me at all how the weather was performing out for the message carried with it such an abundance of sunshine that my whole existence set a pattern of delight and gratitude that will always elevate me to celestial things the billions of times I shall bring it to mind as I contemplate it all, praising God the while for all the happiness forever flowing to me from Lyme.



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This morning, when gathering up my mail at the post office, --a couple of cartons of Talking Books, some magazines, catalogues and letters, my heart sank when the clerk handed me a package, about the size of three suit boxes, all wrapped in one when it had started out in the mails, I noticed the Republican elephant had obviously parked on it somewhere along the way, and the clerk remarked that that package which he said, was from Lyme, had been smashed and one end torn off and he couldn't tell if anything had been lost out of it along the way, adding that no claim could be filed as it was not ~~xx~~ insured. I left it was it was until this evening when a secretary arrived. There were two long boxes of Christmas tinsel and, from the size of what had been the outer wrapping, it was apparant about a third of the original package or the original contents within it, was missing. Naturally my heart sank further but then, thanks to a happy inspiration I asked the secretary to read the address from which it had been sent and was vastly relieved, even filled with joy, learning it had not originated in Lyme but, on the contrary, had been shipped by Mrs. Charles Wood of Wichita, Kansas. Mrs. Wood usually sends me Christmas decorations at this time of the year and she had done so this year and just so long as it was from Kansas and not from Lyme, I didn't care what was missing.

Between this paragraph and the above, there has been a interlude of half an hour or so. At the moment I finished the last sentence in the foregoing paragraph, I heard sounds the front gallery. It flashed through my mind that a couple dozen of Edgar Allen Poe's business ravens all together must be knocking on my chamber door. Even as Mr. Poe reported "open wide I flung the shutter", and lo! no stately ravens entered. Instead, what I had heard was the effects of a sudden gust of wind, --a tornado warning had been issued during the afternoon, and this embryo one had swept from their moorings, the horizontal bamboo poles just under the eaves from which the gourds were suspended. The poles and gourds, had been blow down, banging against the screen doors and against the walls of the house. I couldn't get the doors open wide enough to step out and so I made my exit from the side of the house toward the white garden and went around to see what was up. Not much was up, in truth, but quite a lot was down, including several banana plants, flattened by the gust and sprawling along the pavement of the gallery, all entangled with the bamboo poles and gourds. I pushed back some of the trash to give me a path to the door of my boudoir and am leaving debris there until the morrow, happy withal to return to my desk and the lovely message from Lyme.....

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Thursday, November 28th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool, --in the upper 40's, with a new freshness in the air that is invigorating and a clarity that make tonight's waxing moon radiant.

I tackled the job of putting things to rights on the front gallery before sunup. The cats couldn't make anything out of what had happened last night or what I was up to before passing them their coffee, figuratively speaking.

So began Thanksgiving Day which turned out unusually quiet in these parts and I hold the thought there were moments of delight and relaxation at Lyme.

The clerk and I dined by ourselves on excellent fare across the fence. Celeste and J. H. had accepted an invitation to dine out with the Johnsons, -- and I know of so many Johnsons, I have the slightest notion as to which ones.

But before taking up today, perhaps I should finish off yesterday, a couple of points about which I did not get around to mention in yesterday's memo. Just as the Chopins arrived, there was a 'phone call from James. The time was certainly wrong but I told him I was quite prepared to let the visitors entertain themselves for a few minutes while we touched on a couple of points. He suggested we might try talking later but I realized that the Delphin and Moody kids might short-circuit such a hope and so we went ahead "in a slow hurry". He said he had been worn out "moving all that stuff" during the past couple of weeks. I hadn't and still don't have the vaguest notion as to what was being moved and from where to where. I let that go by. He said Kay was doing pretty good and since he never stresses misery, I don't have much concept as to what that meant. I did not tell him that the other day when the artist passed this way, <sup>she</sup> asked me to 'phone Toosie Millsbaugh, asking her to send some paints by mail, Miss Hunter had remarked that Mr. Pipes usually supplies her paints but that she hadn't seen him lately although her daughter, Jackie, in passing his house in town the other day, had seen some trucks there. I had inquired from several people over the past week if anyone had seen Kay but nobody had. I am wondering if the lady-doctor could have advised that Kay and James move down to 209 Scout



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under the same roof with Mrs. Crabtree during the recuperation but that is merely a guess on my part and I didn't ask. I passed along the word that James' review of Jallon had gone forward to the *Natchez Democrat* and he seemed glad of that and that's about all the ground we covered.

On the Noel Department, a package goes forward to Lyme at the same time on the morrow that these two memos head out. I trust I may be forgiven for rushing the season but since a couple of the items arrived in Wednesday's post at the same time the package, flattened by the Republican elephant reached me, I thought perhaps it would be a good idea to make the most of the opportunity their arrival provided, enabling me to get them going in the right direction before more Republican elephants began sitting down. I placed the two or three items in a brown paper sack so the box in which the sack is traveling may be disposed off readily and inside the larger paper sack is a smaller one so the packing may be removed from the larger sack, leaving mighty little to be transferred to the smaller one. All the time I was fiddling with one of the individual packages, I was laughing in my long beard, remembering that I had remarked that you might find it difficult to manage such a cumbersome big package as I imagined it would be, only to discover when it arrived in Wednesday's mail, that little Miss Lee had been so right in expressing the opinion that such a package would not be very large. Turned out that the package is only about the size of a bottle of shaving lotion which shouldn't stagger anybody for its dimensions. Now I am asking myself if I should have unwrapped the thing to see nothing was missing but you will let me know about that.

When I arrived across the fence for the 9 o'clock coffee break this morning, the TV was functioning, much to the delight of all present for the Macy parade, -10 o'clock New York, time, I suppose. I got the impression from the light on the screen that the sun was shining, a fact which made me rejoice for those in that area, especially as some weather station 3 hours earlier had reported much rain, sleet and snow for the northern section of the country without bothering to specify the individual States.

Because of the holiday, the St. Mathew's Clinic was not doing business today and so I did not see my Thursday morning visitor. Nevertheless I phoned his wife to pass along congratulation because this morning's radio announced that their Hatchitoches son had just been voted the Professor of the Year by the students of Northwestern.

So runeth Thanksgiving and every time I glance in the direction of yesterday's message from Lyme I instinctively add my own Amen.....

15841

15840

Friday, November 29th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 50's until dusk when it began sprinkling. The weather man says it will continue cool and rainy throughout the weekend.

Today's post brought the over-sized envelope from Lyme containing the columns and I hasten to congratulate little Miss Lecon the fine job done in transforming a big envelope into a merely over-sized one. If I had studied up such an invention, I should never have effected such a neat contrivance with only a dab of tape to assist in the creation, looking for all the world like a commercial over-sized item.

You will be as amused as I when I tell you that in the same mail came a letter from National Geographic that I found distinctly on the hilarious side. I can never think of anything to give the Registers. This year James mentioned that they do not take it and so I got busy and ordered a subscription for them. That seemed simple enough I discovered by today's post that I was wrong for here came an envelope from that institution, containing my order for the subscription, the money for same and, although there was no letter, there was a slip on which appeared half a dozen printed reasons which might be checked the Geographic to explain why the original communication was being returned. The one intended for me, I suppose, since opposite it was a penciled X mark. That stated that the order was being returned because no funds accompanied the order. I shall try once more to see if I can get anywhere on the second go-round by simply writing another letter attaching the original order and the money returned to me.

There was a note from Robina. The Mrs. Davis she mentioned is another Storm, I guess, for she is 96 and still going strong.

I arranged my work today by avoiding getting too involved in a major project so that I might the more conveniently receive Judy Jones and a friend, la Jones having written me last week she would be passing this way on the 29th to pick up some pictures at the artist's house.



04821

15841

In answering her letter, I had suggested that she drop the artist first, telephoning me from there to be sure I would not be encumbered by Shreveport, etc. Along about first dark this evening I called the artist to ask if she had seen Miss Jones yet. She said she had not but Miss Jones had called her a few days back to see about some pictures and asked her to phone me or dash over and tell me that she would not be coming from New Orleans this weekend after all. I thanked the artist for letting me know. She said she was aiming to give me the message last Wednesday when she passed this way but didn't think of it until I called her to give her a message for Mr. Millspaugh but thought nothing about it by the time she got through talking.

I finished reading Muller's Loom of History last night. In printed form, the volume probably carries a map which would be helpful if one tried reading this sketch of Asia Minor from beginning to end, as I did. There's a lot of data that registered rather vaguely, through no fault of the author but my incapacity to keep the identity of so many people with so many unfamiliar names straight in my own mind. Toward the end, there is a lot about Saint Paul and a bigger lot about Islam, Mohammed and 20th century Turkey,-- too much, as a matter of fact, for a book ostensibly designed as geographic and historical study. I got quite a lot out of the Mohammed stuff although I had no idea I was going to get bogged down in that. Muller remarks that the Koran probably was the most effective book on religion in producing such a speedy impression on the greatest number of people and, come to think of it, Christianity in contrast was without the New Testament for a long time and probably was too involved theoretically, as opposed to the Koran's aim to captivate the comprehension of multitudes.

Mrs. Eakin, if that's how she spells it, called me today from Alexandria to wish me a blessed happy Thanksgiving. She said she was writing me a letter shortly but wanted to say Howdy in case the seasonal rush delayed her correspondence. She said the Heritage quarterly is scheduled to appear shortly and that Hodges Gardens would be featured in this first issue and that the Melrose gardens would be featured in the Spring issue.

I hold the thought the holiday rush isn't putting little Miss Lee into a whirl. If it were possible to grab a day of rest on the Sabbath, what a help that would be.....

84821

15842

Sunday, December 1st, 1168.

Memorandum:

Thermometer in the 40's with another 3 inches of rain on Saturday bringing the total up to 8 inches for Friday and Saturday. It appears that Montrose is to go under again this fall even as it did last Spring, what with water already spilling over the Montrose - Melrose highway.

I hold the thought that next weekend's weather may be less damp, what with the turning on of the lights scheduled to take place on the 7th. I understand both the junior and senior S. G. Henrys are coming from Baton Rouge, the Couregers from New Iberia, enroute home from Hawaii and, one supposes the Shreveport contingent will also be among those present.

It must have been Saturday that Thelma called me or on it Friday. Be that as it may, I shall run the risk of repeating myself. She and John wanted to come down to get pictures of the pecan harvest. We laughed about that when I told her there were none here to harvest perhaps the press has made mention of the travels of the senior Senator from Louisiana. Thelma and John were down in Ellender country recently and they reported that the Senator, to avoid the Chicago convention, had gone to Russia prior to that October doings in the windy city. It is said the Senator finds it so convenient to visit in the land of the workers Paradise, what with being supplied with a car, chauffeur, interpreter and ability to go anywhere he pleases. Well, I should think so. She said she thought he has not returned as yet. Being away off yonder, perhaps he hasn't as yet heard that the convention is over and that there is a new President-elect.

James just called. I do not remember that he ever called on a Sunday night before. Perhaps he has tried but never could find a free party line. He said he had heard from several people in Natchez regarding Mrs. Moore and that Mrs. Moore wrote came as a surprise for I can't recall her taking up the quill at this season. I suppose he had sent her a copy of Jallou and I am glad she acknowledged it so soon.



31821

15843

I inquired after Kay's good health and he said she is making good progress and was walking about. I rather expected she might ask to speak with me but perhaps she was in another part of the house and, since I wasn't sure about how she did feel, I thought it just as well to inquire no more at the moment. In the midst of something he started to tell me about the artist, he had to break off in response to a summons from Mrs. Crabtree to come to supper. It was good to hear from that quarter but I shall be glad when I can get some additional news such as their present address, etc. for I am under the impression he was calling from 209 South but of course, was only a guess.

The other night, Thursday, perhaps, I heard an interesting re-broadcast of a program out of Denver. I listen to that station almost every night during the winter until the arrival of Day Light Savings when it doesn't come through at all. It's a program that reminds me somewhat of one that used to originate on the East coast and, like it, is called Conversation, or such in which the moderator is always the same person but the guests always different. On this one that was re-broadcast from several years back, the moderator was speaking not from the studio but from his Colorado home and his guest was Ferber, the one time New Yorker cartoonist and author of "Years With Ross". If I remember correctly, the Clifton Fadiman "Conversation" used to last for one hour but this re-broadcast of James Ferbert ran twice that length and was entertaining throughout. Sometime I must re-read the "Years With Ross" vol for, if memory serves, it was quite an entertaining book.

You will find the letter from Salt Meadow interesting. I can squeeze it and the snapshots into an envelope. This is the season when personal correspondence tapers off so far as most people are concerned, what with all the post cards to be handled and all the festivities getting under way on every side. Were I a mathematician, I might feel an impulse to make some kind of an elaborate graph, showing the up-swing and down-swing in the volume of personal correspondence over a period of twelve months. It might be interesting but of not the slightest value. Be that as it may, a busy man is just ahead for little Miss Lee and I shall be holding the thought she may find time to catch her breath every once in a while.....

15844

24821

Monday, December 2nd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Cold, misty and cloudy, cold being in the 40's.

It was good finding Doreatha in the Department of Pots and Pans this morning. I thought she looked rested and she said she was feeling pretty good.

The enclosures are of no particular interest although I did think it kind of the present owner of the Uncle Jack statue to take time out to write.

The ground is much too damp for transplanting things but bushes with root systems close to the top of the ground slide from their moorings so easily that I decided I would save some of them the rigors of being dug up by simply loosening the ground surface and letting them ease out for I had some nandina bushes I wanted to move into a hedge design. The operation went along smoothly enough and although I moved only 50 or 60 bushes, it enough to give me some notion about their appearance in their new role. I shall transplant another half hundred on the morrow and that will get that effort taken care of. October is the ideal time to move nandina, they say, but I remember so well Mr. Boghelier's admonition, -- transplant when you are ready regardless of the whims of the plants.

And this reminds me that on some farm and nursery program this morning, I heard an expert telling his listening world that now is the time to transplant dormant things, -- crepe myrtles, magnolias, fruit trees and so on. Apparently nobody ever told the expert that of all the trees in the world, magnolias above all others should never be moved but in springtime when the sap is just beginning to surge upward because the roots of the magnolias are fleshy and if moved in the winter months are more than likely to rot before their circulatory system begins again. It certainly pays to consider the source when one pays attention to the experts.



14821

15845

The artist called me this noon, saying she was having to go to town to get some medicine for the Hong-kong misere and as she had not received any white paint from Miss Toosie, she thought she would stop at Mr. Pipes' house and see if he had any. She said she thought she would recognize his house but wondered if I knew the number. She said somebody thought maybe he had moved away. I realized it was no use trying to enlighten her about the 209 South Williams residence and so I told her if she didn't find him at 406, she might go directly to Miss Toosie who could certainly lend her a hand on finding a paint shop. She volunteered the information that the water is no longer rising at Montrose and that everybody in that neighborhood is hoping we shall have no more rain for a few days until some of the present over-supply may have run off a little. I heard the prediction for the month as given by the Shreveport Weather Bureau for the Arklatex area which is for continued heavy rains and below average temperatures for December.. Well, we shall see what we shall see--and feel.

On the social front there is inordinate activities all around and about. The frequency of parties mounts from day to day and plans for visitors, --and probably some not planned, gets into the agenda. Aside from the New Iberia people for this coming weekend, there will be both sets of S. G.'s from Baton Rouge and "somebody told somebody" that Dootsie Baby, --remember her, --is driving down from Dayton, Ohio, for the Christmas lights with a new boy-friend, and I suppose the advent of Dootsie means the arrival of her mama which is just another way of saying that for this weekend at least the prospects are good for the goose to hang high. Come to think of it, I wonder where that expression comes from and what it implies, -- "the goose hangs high". That the goose should be hanging seems odd in contrast to flying and what might it signify if the bird is hanging low or high.

Tonight I knocked off a column under the title of "Helen's Bouquet" I must touch upon the subject at some subsequent sitting as at least one of the personalities in the piece may have been casually known to little Miss Leetwo or th  
3

And now I must round up a chicken salade sandwich and a glass of chocolate milk, followed by a flattening exercise in the direction of my downy pillow....

15846

Tuesday, December 3rd, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair in the 40's with a promise of a heavy frost tonight and I can believe the probability.

Among the bigger moons I can remember, tonight's giant orb was rising just about the time tonight or, more precisely, this evening just as the sun was sliding down behind the Montrose hills. Occasionally I meet people from the Mishou -- or whatever they call that lunar project and I am always forgetting to ask them if it is true that it is always brighter, -- the moon -- on the night before the calendar says it is full. I cannot see why this should be true and it probably isn't but for as long as I can remember, it has seemed to me to be so.

Both yesterday and today at the coffee hour, mine hostess spoke of the senior S. G.'s being here this weekend but at supper J. H. remarked he had heard nothing about their plans to come although he has spoken with S. G. on the phone a couple of times in the past couple of days.

It seems odd that the husband and wife would have such different notions as to weekend plans.

About 3 o'clock this afternoon, Shreveport blew in in company with the same gentleman who was with her on her visit of a couple or three weeks back. She said that Dootsie Baby is indeed flying down from Dayton for the fireworks. She said she and her daughter would arrive here Friday for the weekend and asked how many people we were planning to have. In all truth, I told her I didn't know. She is forever saying she isn't coming here if the Baton Rouge people are planning to be around. If the merchant-planter said nothing to her about other members of the family expecting to come, far be it from me to express any calculations on the subject.

She said Nina McInnis is at present visiting some of the Gagniers in Opelousas and she asked me to write her, inviting her to come up here to spend a few weeks at the big house with her. That's typical of her line of operations, getting me to issue the in-



15847

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invitation on her behalf although seemingly on my part, so she  
can explain to the store that, not she, but I  
wanted Nina to come and accordingly Shreveport would have to come  
on my account to be here to entertain Nina. Needless  
to say I am not rushing onto this keyboard to write any  
thing of the kind.

Today's post brought a recording of "Miracle in  
Philadelphia" by Catherine Drinker Bowen. It's an account  
of the Constitutional convention that ran from May to  
September, 1787. I find it like so many of the  
Bowen books altogether readable. Lots of people confuse  
the convention that brought forth the Declaration of Independence  
and the Constitutional convention, both held in the same  
city and same building but a decade apart. Dr. Franklin was  
present at the Constitutional convention but  
John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the latter so promi-  
nent in the Declaration doings, were both in Europe  
during the Constitutional convention, Adams in London  
and Jefferson in Paris.

In the winter or spring prior to the convening of  
of the convention in Philadelphia, Washington  
noted in his diary that he had suffered "from gout  
in the head". Fortunately he recovered from that  
unexpected malady before May arrived. Dr. Franklin,  
suffering from gout, not in the head but the feet,  
attended the meetings, transported from his home  
not far away, in a Sedan chair he had brought back  
with him from Paris. The poles on the Sedan chair were  
ten feet long and the porters were prisoners from  
the nearby jail. Dr. Franklin, chair and all, were  
carried into the assembly room where Dr. Franklin was  
assisted to the conference table, the chair of Sedan name  
was removed by the porters who returned to the jail until  
it was time at the close of day for them to return and  
pick up Dr. Franklin and transport him back to his residence. So  
little details included by la Bowen contribute much to  
rounding out her account of the general proceedings.

Miss Hunter just called to say she had  
gone to town today to get her perscription re-filled  
and to stop by Mr. Pipe's house to see if he had  
any paint. She said she had got along real nice  
but although she had stopped in front of 406, she hadn't  
"seed nobody", and so she went on to see Miss Toosie  
and learned she had mailed some paint to Melrose  
that morning. Why I should have asked, I don't know but  
I did inquire if she got her medicine alright. She hesitated a  
moment, giggled and then confessed that she had forgotten  
to take the medicine bottle with its perscription number  
on it and so was going back to town on the morrow.....

15848

15848

Wednesday, December 4th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair between 30 and the upper 40's. There was  
a heavy frost and I found ice on one of the iron  
wash pots at 6:40 before sunup. Tonight the  
moon is glorious even as it was 24 hours ago.

And speaking of the moon reminds me that  
I mentioned it at supper tonight, J. H., Lull Hawkins,  
the clerk and I being present. In remarking upon its  
beauty when it rose between 5 and 5:30, I speculated on the  
hour it would rise one day later. The  
clerk, seeming provoked at my ignorance, said that of course  
it would rise one minute later than it did yesterday. Casually  
I expressed the thought that I had supposed it would be nearer  
an hour and a minute but J. H. said there was only a minute  
or two in the time as between one evening and the next. Lull  
said he didn't know but that his son was studying scientific thi  
in college and he would find out from him and let me know. Natur  
I dropped the moon right there.

As for the enclosures, the letter from Dr. Dormon  
gave me the greatest pause. I don't know if, as has long  
been the custom, she is talking on the 'phone frequently  
with Kay but I assume not. But Carrie does hear from  
her friend, Sudie, rather frequently and since Sudie with  
her ability to stir-up Kay with tomfoolery from  
Wallace to Russia and back, it is possible  
Carrie is getting some trickle of news which  
gives her some understanding of what is going on  
at the Registers. It would be interesting to know  
if one or another house has been sold, either 1226 which  
Kay owns, or 406 which belongs to James. I believe it was the  
1226 garden that Carrie planted as neither 406  
or 209 South needed any further embellishment. Perhaps James will  
be calling me from 406 one of these days.

I am sending along a note to James by to-  
morrow's post, enclosing a column from last  
Sunday's Natchez Democrat. On second thought, perhaps  
it would be better not to send the clipping, which I  
received today without any letter attached to it. The  
reason it might be better not to send it is the  
headline of the piece since it states that  
the article is about a Moorish Prince of Natchez, as told  
by me. Oh, Lord, how can caption writers mix things up.



15849

Of course I could drop James a note simply stating that I am advised by the *Hatchez Democrat* that the review of his book appeared in their paper of last Sunday and I don't suppose he would go to the trouble to order a copy.

The merchant-planter joined the clerk and me at noon dinner today. Yesterday he had told the clerk that his wife was going to be away on the morrow and that the clerk should obtain a pork roast for today's dinner. His wife will always protest if he asks for pork for all of his doctor's have admonished him against eating it and so, since the wife wasn't at home, he made up for lost time today. He even went so far as to have more of it tonight for supper.

Tomorrow we shall all dine across the fence inasmuch as Doreatha will be going to Shreveport tomorrow for a check-up. I shall be holding the thought that she gets a perfect report.

Last night I read a little more from La Bowen's *Miracle in Philadelphia*. She did something by way of a pattern I had never encountered before and I found the idea excellent. Half way through the book which that far had been devoted to the daily doings of the convention, she suddenly jumped into a new chapter, given over to impressions of America and set forth by various travelers from Europe in the 1788's, letters to people back home, diaries, newspaper accounts and so on, giving the reader of the *Miracle* the flavor of the colonies at that time, not only as it was but also as people reported it, often not comprehending some of the customs and ways of life they were picking up in their travels. Many of these were hilarious, and their introduction into the book right in the middle of the accounts of what had been going on at the Convention made a delightful interlude. I didn't finish the chapter and am looking forward to resuming the business as soon as I can return to it.

Mrs. Chapin just called. She had been to a bingo game at some Church frolic and felt very pleased with her evening which she reported as having been pleasant enough with some of her friends and profitable, too, as she had won twenty dollars.

And now I'm going to take a turn in the Ghana garden where the crisp air will feel invigorating and create some extra yearning for a snack which requires slight encouragement. And may there be a pretty full moon over Lyme tonight....

15850

Thursday, December 5th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with no frost last night with the thermometer in the upper 50's today and with another nice big w fat but slightly waning moon in the skies.

I was reminded of that adage: it never rains but it pours when noon arrived this morning. The clerk and I dined across the fence because Doreatha had had to go for a checkup in Shreveport. She headed out in that direction where her appointment was for 12 noon but she never arrived, having been in an auto accident in town. She and her sister with whom she was traveling were rushed off to the *Hatchitoches* hospital where they are tonight. How badly banged up, I haven't been able to learn. According to my informant, the two ladies were in their car, just on the edge of town where they stopped to let a train pass. The son-in-law of Reginald Prudhomme of Bermuda was some distance behind them but failed to notice either the train or that they had stopped for it and smashed into them.

Picture my surprise last night when I received a call from the lady doctor who needed the name of one of her former patients who used to live on ye olde plantation. I thought the opportunity to avoid further worry about the state of Kay's health and blandly stated quite frankly that I should like her, as the physician, to set me straight on the matter. She said that there had been a bursting of a small vein in the brain but that she thought it was nothing to worry about and that the patient seemed to be getting along alright. As the lady doctor is considered by some people as an alarmist, it seemed especially re-assuring to hear her say she thought there was nothing to worry about. That was all I wanted to know but the conversation was rather extended on a variety of subjects, --family, practice and so on. I took the opportunity to ask her something about which I had been curious for the past year, --something about which she would have an opinion because she, herself, had attended operations in the transplanting of hearts in Houston.



15851

15851

her feelings were about the subject in general is exactly what I wanted to find out. She said that generally speaking, she did see much point in them. She went on to say that she had been tremendously impressed by the skill of the surgeons and the response of the patients but that when viewed from another angle, she saw point in trying to extend a particular life expectancy, especially when either the age of the patient or an assortment of other considerations made it manifest that the person had probably just about run the course for which he was prepared to manage successfully. She remarked that there are so many people in hospitals who scarcely know what is going on and often really do not know and that it seems pointless and even lacking in sympathy to perform heart transplantings in the face of the fact that even though the operation may be a success physically, it will offer little or nothing to the patient already beyond conscious of what for the balance of his life will be going on around him.

In last night's memo I didn't get a round to refer to the letter from Kathleen Balthazar which was enclosed. I know most of the Balthazars, all of whom are very light in color, and several other people mentioned including the Joneses, the Delphins et al. I always was delighted with the name of Catherine Clifton who married Carroll Jones, sr., -- grandparetns of Bill, Randolph and Noble Jones. Catherine Clifton is buried in the graveyard across the way. I found it interesting to learn from the Balthazar letter that Catherine Clifton should have been born in Oklahoma, -- 1827, I believe she said. I find myself wondering if Catherine could have had some Cherokee Indian ancestors for I doubt if there were many people, white or negro, living in Oklahoma at that early date for I think Oklahoma didn't really get going so far as white settlement was concerned until the late 1880's. And how did she ever get to Alexandria, I wonder. The letter mentions Carroll Jones as born in Summer County, Tenn. I think, according to his tombstone across the way, it was Somerset County Tennessee. According to the oldsters in this area, Carroll was the colored son of a white planter up yonder and the mulatto son used to serve as jockey when his papa's horses raced, coming to Louisiana occasionally to do so. Where his sister came into the picture, I cannot imagine. Carroll, after the war, and especially during Reconstruction, bought property of value on the river, still owned by the Joneses, and for a while was a deputy Sheriff of Natchitoches Parish.

Ho! hum! so much to chatter about but I really must get on with some chores.....

15852

Friday, December 6th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Particles of water, mist rather than drizzle, hung in the air from some pre-dawn hour until noon when the sun came out, remaining clear the balance of the day.

I received a call from James about 2 this afternoon at the conclusion of which he said Kay wanted to talk with me, too. Her voice sounded in full strength but I got the impression I would do well to make transitions from one topic to another rather more slowly than one in usual conversation since she seemed vaguely uncertain if I switched from one thing to another without leisurely approach once or twice I noticed that she had to cast about for words which normally she would not have had to search for, as, for example when we were talking of la Dormon and Briarwood and the different birds now hibernating there, she said a little later when she feels a little stronger, it would be nice if we could run out to Briarwood early in the afternoon to get a view of the woods in winter and then hurry to notice the differences in the gardens.....the gardens at..... what is the name of the place where you live.....I know it so well but for the moment it escapes me.

She said she had decided to sell 1226 but couldn't recall those digits which she has always used readily enough. She said she didn't want to bother keeping up both places and was thinking of having Carrie move many of the rare plants down to their present residence. Whether this is a firm decision or a passing whim, I wouldn't know.

She said I was the first person to whom she had talked on the phone except for relatives on the West coast since her illness. She expressed the hope I would come up to dine within a week or two. I had expected her to hand the phone back to James but she cut the connection when she said Goodbye and I made no attempt to restore the connection. James had mentioned he had received the review printed by the Natchez Democrat and said it was unbelievable how many errors



15853

15853

turned up on every page of the paper, --dozens of them to a page. His own name was spelled *Jame* throughout. This seems to be in line with what I have heard from newspaper people over the past few years. I am told that nearly all if not all newspapers today use no proof readers at all on the theory that the time saved by eliminating that practice is justified since perfection in the printed page isn't worth the effort. Somebody said that even the *New York Times* has either been toying with the idea of having their pages proof-read or have actually done away with that ancient and honorable custom.

I was told this afternoon that *Doreatha* is still in the *Hatchitoches* hospital but had no broken bones. As for plans for this weekend so far as family and friends are concerned, I know nothing. Sister had said on Wednesday when passing this way that she would arrive here Friday afternoon but I did not see her or anyone else. Probably all who are coming will arrive on the morrow if not, indeed, later tonight.

I finished "*Miracle in Philadelphia*" last night and prized God for the smoothness of the Bowen smoothness of sentences which flow along so smoothly. The book was read by *Kermit Murdock* who is perhaps next best to *Alexander Scourby* in that Art. I must say, however, that both in *la Bowen's* sentences and *Herr Scourby's* agility with words, I occasionally have to remind myself that I had better pay better attention if I don't forget in what is being said and how it is written instead of merely floating along without paying attention to the material being presented.

I had rather expected to hear from *Natalie* who has a column that may be run through one of these days before it goes to the printer. Perhaps she has been unsuccessful in her efforts to reach me. Heaven know the *Delphin* and *Moody* kids have kept the wire bogged down steadily enough. It is possible, too, I suppose, that *Natalie* may be doing some entertaining a little on her own hook or for her family this light festival weekend.

I almost forgot to say that *James* reported that they had received a letter by *I. S. Willard* from *Paris*. She reported having seen her daughter-in-law and the new baby but I gather her son was in *St. Louis* -- of all places. *I. S. Willard* reported further that when running to catch a train, --somewhere in Europe, she fell down and did something to her ribs but is bandaged up and moseying about alright in spite of that. And now I must do a bit of moseying in the direction of my downy pillow and may there be happiness in *Lyme*....

15854

15854

Sunday, December 8th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair with a cold northeast breeze by day and a heavy frost by night with the same thing promised for the next few days.

It was grand on Saturday to find an air mail from *Lyme* in the post office. I enjoyed so much running through it last evening and am impatient to re-read it again at the next opportunity, either tonight or on the morrow. I was so interested in the clipping, too, with the cutting off of the greetings to *Santa* by *Tall Charlie* to save some sous. I had never heard of this practice of letting greetings before and am sorry it has been discontinued.

I am especially appreciative of what you had to tell me about *Jallon* which reached your true hand. It seems a little odd but quite understandable that I should not have had any of it read to me as yet. The time will come shortly, however, I hope. In the mean time, all you had to tell me is doubly appreciated.

And while speaking of unread books, I believe little *Miss Lee* has probably already found a two volume set in her stocking and I haven't read a word from them either. The fact that they were published in the middle of the 18th century suggests that, so far as the text is concerned, they may not mention many things that an artist in the 19th century might have touched upon. Even though it may turn out that only the illustrations are of interest, *Leston* somehow got the idea that of all the people in the world, little *Miss Lee* would be the only person in the world who should have them.

In Saturday's post, too, came greetings from auntie, a package of the most delectable candie or should I say candy and some nice round cakes about 4 inches in diameter. I couldn't resist sampling them immediately and I must say they are as wonderful as the spirit behind them. Chocolate is the dominant flavor with lots of subtle ingredients that delight both the soul and the inner man. We preparing such delicious things for me, auntie couldn't have possibly imagined how timely would be their arrival, what with *Doreatha* still in the hospital and the need for midnight snacks so much the order of the day.



15855

As for the weekend of the Hatchitoches festival, and the usual plethora of people, things went off rather better than I anticipated. Sister who on Wednesday had threatened to honor us by coming on Friday for a visit, did not, in fact, put in an appearance. Neither did the S. G.'s, senior, make it although the S. G.'s junior, drove to with with Pat and Juanita B. for the afternoon and evening, coming down here for Sunday dinner. Dootsie B. by phoned me from Hatchitoches this noon, saying her Aunt June Henry had some people from Tyler, Texas, whom she wanted to send down for a tour. I said I would be at the front gate at 3 o'clock and I was but I never did see the people or hear anything more from either Dootsie B. by or her Aunt June.

Judy Jones, brought her Miss Radford on Saturday afternoon. They remained until first dark, remarking as they left that they were going on to Hatchitoches to spend the night and on to Shreveport Sunday morning. They asked if I might suggest a comfortable place, either hotel or motel but when I mentioned that everything by way of a caravansarie for December 7th had been reserved since last June, I thought they would be well advised to push on to Shreveport. They had never heard of the light festival but I reckon they were well acquainted with the subject before they ever got through the town and on their way north.

While they were here, a slave passed this way to tell me a cabin down by the spillway, just across the road from where the artist used to dwell, had just gone up in smoke. It was the home of Coke's widow and her six or eight children, none of whom chanced to be at home. It was Coke who died last summer by McKinley Brown. Fortunately they have lots of kin-folks around and about. The only things saved were what the family were wearing at the time of the fire. We shall be able to round up lots of things and I shall 'phone the Red Cross in the morning to see what may be forthcoming from that quarter.

Betty Lane Regard Courage, flying back from Hawaii, was met in Shreveport yesterday morning by her husband. They came down here and so were able to attend some parties in town yesterday afternoon and last night. They remarked that Cousin Arthur's new house is quite spiffy as to location on the river, its architecture its gold bathroom fixtures and all.

May it have been as peaceful in Lyme as locally.....

15856

Monday, December 9th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy and a little warmer, in the wake of last night's chill that put ice in the water in the washpot.

I received a call at 10 o'clock this morning from Natalie. I immediately wondered how it could be that she was not busy at Northwestern. She explained that her husband last week had bought her a fine new fur coat for Christmas, giving it to her in advance so she might wear it during the "socializin'" during the Christmas light festival. But instead of going to parties and what not, she had been slowed up by another heart business and accordingly had had to spend the weekend in the local hospital but had returned home this morning. She said what had brought it on was exertion at school. It seems her classes are up several floors of or in a building which suddenly found itself without elevator service and she had had to climb too much of late. She said she had taken up the matter with "the powers that be" and all her classes are being moved to ground level henceforth.

especially anxious to teach until the end of next year when she will be ready for retirement pay.

I had to reach for the phone a sentence or two above and I gather the carrier on this machine somehow got moved which may explain any curious appearance of the layout that developed along the way.

This noon just as I was leaving Yucca to mosey across the field for dinner, I bumped into Randy Jack and wife and the latter's mother.



15856

15857

The little Jacks are just back from their Central American honeymoon that began during last summer. I told them to show her mother about while I skipped across the fence and they did and then we had a little chat before they had to head out for Alexandria to dine with Blythe. They wanted me to see the parrot they had found down Panama who has been traveling with them ever since and will go forward with them when they finish their journey to their new home in Seattle.

It was Carmen who called a couple of paragraphs above. She said it was wonderful to see the beaming on the faces of the family that had lost everything on Saturday when the fire destroyed their cabin. She said she had told them that Lestan had phoned her and that she had been able to round up some nice things for them and they seemed so please. She said that Bill Larson, according to his mama, is in a new play, the name of which she thought at the moment is "Oh, World" but that the name might be changed between Boston where it is trying out and the Broadway opening. She said the backers of "Hello, Dolly" are behind this latest try and although Bill is not a warbler, he believes he can make strange noises enough if the script writers can't change things, leaving him merely to handle the spoken words. As between Saturday's in-coming mail and today's, the trickle has augmented into a torrent and I suppose it is the same across the nation. As I am especially anxious to have you not miss the second review of Jallon, and fearing in view of the heaviness of the mails at the moment, I am enclosing the original remarks I made about the book which the author decided to replace by the one that he felt suited his purposes better. I have no doubt there are readers for both versions and, happily, nobody will ever know which one, if either, impelled anyone to rush right out and invest in a copy of the book.

I am so sorry that long before this late date I did not send a note to Lyme, suggesting that with the hurly-burly of the holidays already upon us, it would be nice to know that little Miss Lee should concentrating on demands that cannot be so easily side-tracked for the moment and thus letting attempts to communicate with Lestan until pressures lighten up a bit. I'm afraid I am too late in writing thus but I'm holding the thought that for the balance of such boisterous times, as much energy as possible will be conserved, in full knowledge that whatever skips develop, they will be understood perfectly.....

15858

Tuesday, December 10th, 1968.

15857

Memorandum:  
Fair to partly cloudy without a freeze last night and sort of 50-ish all day. The nation wide account of things indicates snow and cold from the Pacific to the Atlantic along the Canadian border but nothing was mentioned about the situation in Lyme which, I hope is getting none of the contents of old Mother Goose's feather bed".

Carmen called me this morning to read me a couple of letters she had received in the morning mail. One of them was from Di Winslow's wife, Dick being that nephew of Carmen's who does things with Walt Disney productions and other theatrical agencies. When Dick was in Hatchitoches a couple of years ago, the son of one of Carmen's friends, -- the Majors, although that is not the spelling of the name although it sounds like that, -- the Major's boy was delegated to show Dick where there was good fishing and Dick appreciated the service. A few months later this same boy was arrested a couple of times for breaking into stores and hauling away loot. A couple of arrests taught him nothing and one day a while later, he broke into Mrs. Chopin's house and stole her late son's coin collection. I remember the boy who looked average enough when down here once with Carmen, -- a high school youth at the time. I remember on his visit here he wasn't interested in making a little tour with the Carmen contingent but asked me if I thought ..if I thought he might find any poisonous snakes on the margin of the river. His parents let him keep snakes in their home in town. A little later when the college was having some kind of a reptile exhibit, the boy contributed two deadly poisonous reptiles which, sometime during the exhibit, were stolen and everyone assumed it was he who had lifted his own property. Getting no where in school, the boy, what with induction into service just around the corner, enlisted in the Navy and now he is stationed at San Diego or some such place and Dick's wife was writing in today's letter how they had had the youth and one of his friends to their Hollywood home for the weekend and what a fine time everybody had had although, as is understandable, it d a little odd that the Major boy had brought with him a bag with a snake in it which he kept in his room during the weekend. I said: "Oh!" wondering how anyone would be entertaining a youth with such inclinations for a weekend with snake to boot. It strikes me this is a case in which the Winslows with their small children, are simply inviting trouble



15859

There was another call from the Registers today, just a friendly chat with some speculation on Kay's part about me coming to dine with them shortly, perhaps next week or the following. She said Mrs. Crabtree was getting impatient to prepare lots of good things she knows I would enjoy. I doubt if time or the season is making much impression on Kay at the moment. Perhaps she has forgotten her birthday is on Friday, the 13th if she might be looking for an excuse for a dinner party. And if the 13th has slipped her mind, it may not have occurred to her that Christmas is approaching and since I have dined with them in recent years, it would seem that the 25th might be pretty close to wedge in a dinner between now and fifteen days hence. I had gathered from one thing or another that James had mentioned lately that Kay was able to eat things alright now and from what the lady doctor told me, I got a like impression that the mixup about food was a thing of the past. Accordingly I was impressed when Kay said, in speaking of the fine dinner Mrs. Crabtree had in mind to serve, that while she herself, that is Kay, would probably not partake of food, she could at least have the pleasure of reclining on a sofa nearby and enjoy the conversation we might have during the dinner. In short, I can't figure out exactly how things are turning in that household and I shall be just as happy if Kay can get back to normal health before I find myself a dinner guest, regardless of the fine nature of the fare and the delight of being with friends.

I did not get around to open any of today's Christmas cards which, in view of letters, I did not get around to open today but shall tomorrow, I suppose. I noticed a card from the Warren Ogdens which came as a mild surprise for it has been so long since I heard from them. I suppose I thought they had probably got lost on an Atoll in the Pacific where it seemed to me they were threatening to go the last time I heard from them.

I called Natalie today but received no response which I hope means she was feeling sufficiently well to go out, --possibly to school. A day or two ago I recall how her husband had reported a visit he had made a year or so ago to one of the big broadcasting place in Chicago where huge discs, feeding the outlets to major networks spin around automatically at the proper hour to supply the networks with all kinds of programs. What reminded me of that account was the fact that an NBC sports program came on at the appointed hour for a go at things, to be followed by a David Brinkley news cast. In Mr. Brinkley's place, however, the same preceding sports thing came on to repeat itself for a minute or two before somebody caught it, suddenly tossing in the Brinkley business shorn of its sponsor. And so things turn, proving even the net works can go awry now and then....

15860

Wednesday, December 11th, 1968.

Memorandum:

to Fair, to partly cloudy in the upper 50's which seems to be just about what it is up in the snow country of Colorado, according to my radio.

I made it a point to listen to the Nixon presentation of his Cabinet tonight and found I liked this innovation which must be especially interesting to viewers of TV Being Republicans, they all seemed to be somewhat on the conservative side but that is to be expected since it was conservatism the electorate voted. The President-elect seems to be going out of his way to be polite which is certainly becoming in any man of power. I hold the thought this represents a genuine change since the old days when he indulged in such s ameful tricks as when trying successfully to unseat Helen Goshagan Douglas from her seat in the Senate. As I consider the top people participating in tonight's gathering, I regret to say the figure of the Vice President elect still tends to fill me with wonder about his capability and makes me pray more fervently Mr. Nixon may survive his tenure of office.

I shall enclose a few holiday greeting cards although none of them are of any particular interest. I got a laugh out of Mildred McCoy's personal message. That woman is certainly a sight

In another realm of the ridiculous, the local news media today spoke of ex-Governor Jimmy Davis as having taken unto himself a new wife, his first spouse having died a year or so ago. The new wife is a psalm-singing lady in the country music bracket. When asked to give her age she said she was 16 years old thirty two years ago. Her new husband, Jimmy, is said to be 68. He is said to be among the crookedest Go ernors Louisiana has ever had which is saying quite a lot but he, like his wife, can sing psalms quite prettily.



128821

15861

Another radio news item tonight states that the last child of Robert Kennedy will be born on the morrow, his wife, Ethell having entered a Washington hospital today for a caesarian operation on the morrow. With seven boys and three girls for playmates, the new baby ought to find plenty of company during his babyhood. It will be interesting to see what name is selected for tomorrow's arrival. The temptation would naturally be to select something that would project the consciousness of his contemporaries of the circumstances of his birth but everybody will remember that we any need for a reminder in the years ahead.

I wasn't very surprised today when I learned that Lull Hankins who is forever accompanying J. H. on his shorter trips and J. H. and Celeste on their longer jaunts, had lost his job with some electrical concern somewhere in South Louisiana. In former years Lull was with Valley Electric based on Natchitoches but switched over to this other organization as salesman, field representative or some such. I marveled in recent years that any organization could operate with a staff member, taking time out from his work, could be popping up almost any place on the face of the globe and still retain his connection with the firm. Well, it turns out that he couldn't and yet he and J. H. both seemed surprised that this should be so. I understand Lull was offered a place in Valley Electric but declined inasmuch as it wasn't exactly what he wanted. His wife has long been with the Parish Health Center which probably gives the family, --including several children, a feeling of security to the point of being able to be "choosy" about taking a new job.

What with all the seasonal demands on one's time, -- shopping, social engagements and all, my neighbor mentioned yesterday between jumps she hadn't even started writing her Christmas cards. I should imagine all engagements are flexible, however, since I heard tonight that both merchant-painter and wife had suddenly decided to rush down to New Orleans on the morrow, returning Friday or Saturday, I assume. It certainly is a busy time of the year, especially for people who simply have to get about so much.....

128821

15862

Thursday, December 12th, 1968.

#### Memorandum:

Lots of weather, 50 to 60 degrees during the past 24 hours. Cloudy all day with a drizzle beginning around noon with a tornado or two in the northern part of the State and a tremendous electrical storm breaking out here around 7 o'clock and still going strong at 9:45 with a promise of more rain on the morrow, followed by clearing skies and a cold wave by Saturday.

There were three calls from town today from people asking me if I had seen the Louisiana Heritage Quarterly which each had purchased in town at newstands or in stores. I had not. I shall inquire about the availability of the item from the publishers and send one along to little Miss Lee if and when. If I remember correctly, this is the one that was supposed to carry an article about Lestan, a fact that had slipped my mind until one of today's informants gave some implied reference to say in passing.

What with the weather uncertain, pilgrims apparently were deterred from braving the elements today and as both my neighbor and my medical secretary being in New Orleans, I found ample opportunity to do lots of gardening even in the rain all at close of day. I must say I was surprised I had not accomplished more.

I was delighted this afternoon to receive a call from Doreatha who wanted to let me know she was back on the plantation. In spite of the weather, she drove back to town, no sooner than she had reached home, having left all the papers pertaining to the insurance matters concerning her accident. I did not ask her when she thought she might be resuming her post in the culinary department for I did not want to imply that she should resume that job before she felt up to it.

James phoned around 4. He had a or an hilarious tale to tell about his adventure with Jallon in Natchez. It seems he had advertised in the Natchez Democrat and the Garden Club, the Pilgrimage Club and Henderson's Book Shop sold out right away but he didn't know it. The girls in the two clubs couldn't find his



15863

15863

address in their files and the owner of Henderson's had lost the invoice. The latter gentleman, also sold out, hit upon the happy idea of re-ordering by addressing the Louisiana State University Press and got precisely no where. Finally he tracked down someone owning a copy, phoned the publisher in Shreveport and so, at long last, got a call through to James in Hatchitoches. Then the two garden-Pilgrimage ladies followed the same method and thus eventually got two or three hundred copies.

I asked about Kay's good health and he said she was asleep moment but was coming along nicely. I thought of Dr. Coue - with an accent - to myself that progress was indeed being made. We talked of one or two things they had been reacting to, etc., etc. and then broke off when he said he believed he heard her and Mrs. Crabtree stirring about and had been going to see how they were making it. I was glad he had not mentioned that tomorrow is Kay's natal day so that tomorrow morning's greeting can serve as a little surprise to them both.

While I think of it, let me mention that I got off a Metropolitan Museum calendar or engagement book to auntie earlier in the week. I believe it went by air but whether it did or did not doesn't matter since it should surely be there by New Years.

One thing James mentioned had to do with the presentation of the Cabinet last night by Mr. Nixon. James saw it on TV and found that President Eisenhower entered in his diary during his administration regarding his Vice President, to wit, "Dick doesn't grow any".

Tonight's radio mentioned that, according to schedule, the daughter of Robert and Ethel Kennedy was born today in at Georgetown hospital. and I was glad to hear that both mother and daughter were doing just fine.

I tried to contact Natalie both this afternoon and tonight but had no success. I got an answer to my early afternoon call which made me hope she felt well enough to be back at college. Perhaps she tried to get me tonight but couldn't get anything but a busy signal, for the several times I tried to get a wire after 6 until now, I find the party line kinds monopolizing the party line. And now for a dab of desk work and that will be it for tonight.

15864

15864

Friday, December 13th, 1968.

Memorandum: It turned out that last night's storm was more bluster than dampness for there seems to have been only about an inch and a half here although 3 inches came down in the Montrose area. The crash of thunder remained impressive, however, and a bolt from the skies knocked out the telephone system. Today was all blue and gold and breezy and cold.

The nicest thing about today was the letter of the 11th from Lyme. I loved every word and regret only that pressures are such as to make little Miss Lee do the highland fling or whatever they used to call that ancient Scottish jig in order to keep up with the spirited parade of the holidays.

It was so thoughtful to advise regarding the arrival of the parcel and I apologize for sending it so early but it occurred to me that in view of the fragile nature of the slides, it might be just as well to get a little ahead of that old Rep. Blacan elephant and his propensity for parking on packages. I laughed in my beard at little Miss Lee's remark about the propensity of that animal for doing such things when she expressed the hope that another parcel, coming from the direction of Lyme, might have equal good luck in eluding the old pachayrm. I assume that item will be coming along on Saturday or Monday when we shall see what we shall see.

I am glad the slides turned out alright. I did not try to remove them from how ever they were packed although I got the impression they weren't packed much. Mrs. Eakin h that one of another of the gourd shots were especially inter but I am content to take the word of each of yawl on that score.

Little Miss Lee expressed to me the exact feelings that have been expected from that quarter in regard to the "old and rare department" that it should be hers seemed to right and in knowing she felt the way she did naturally fills my soul with delight. Marly alw fascinated Leston but never did he love it so much as when he learned that Miss Lee had come to know it, too, and thus were the only two souls in the world that I know able to share it together.



15865

15865

I am so sorry to learn that the current dis-  
temper has been circulating in the Lyme area and I  
shall be holding the thought that it is now finished with  
its visitation both for those who have been afflicted  
and those merely exposed.

I was interested in learning about the package  
received from mine hostess. I am told they obtained  
some from the Felicians and a few more from up Shreveport  
way to send to special friends which speaks for itself as  
to what classification little Miss Lee falls into. I  
assume my neighbors will be returning from the Crescent City  
tonight.

And thanks, too, and thanks without end for sending  
the clipping about la Du Mond. I shall never know  
which lady exerted the greater impression on me and which  
one made me love the more, Helen Du Monde and  
Elizabeth Vigee-Lebrun for I never saw the one in person  
that I did not think the other in portrait, each looking  
so much alike, each so sweet so far as I know and both of  
them so just plain grand. From the obituary, I was impressed  
sometimes as much by what is omitted as what is mentioned.  
If memory serves, the clipping used as "among the survivors  
going on to mention her daughter, oddly enough named Elizabeth  
Darien and a number of grandchildren. While her husband, Frank  
Vicent Du Mond was mentioned as having died in  
1952, there wasn't a peep about Joe Du Mond,  
their only son, a handsome youth and wonderfully dumb.  
The last time I saw the family in France, Joe had  
recently either married or was about to slide out  
to Seattle to marry some tart, said to be the  
trashiest "torn down piece" anybody could imagine. The family  
always seemed happy. Leston and some of his friends  
accepted their charming invitations, more perhaps because  
the Leston group, no equipped with wings, did not,  
however, specialize in Seattle tarts, and probably it was  
felt the influence on the son couldn't  
be quite so bad as some of his West Coast connections  
might be. Madam Du Mond's sister, "Auntie Flea", was married  
to one of the Pillsbury people in Minnesota or Wis-  
consin, a really charming but quite different from la Du Mond.  
The latter, by the way, had their New York home, not  
in Grammercy Park when I knew them but at Hotel  
des Artistes and sometimes shared with the Vonnoks their  
ruined island monastery south of Fontaine-  
bleau when in the country in France. From the clipping, I shall  
be able to write Elizabeth at Darien which I shall be so happy  
able to do, thanks to little Miss Lee's thoughtfulness.

So much to chatter about but I had better  
give somebody else a chance to get a word in but I must say it  
again for the happy day that has been mine, thanks to  
little Miss Lee.....

15866

15866

Sunday, December 15th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and cold at freezing with ample ice during  
Satu day and sufficiently cool by day as to keep  
the ice from melting in spite of the sunshine. My radio  
early this morning spoke of several inches of snow all through the Lyme  
neighborhood. I had the thought that little Miss Lee doesn't  
have to stir out of doors until it is gone.

In Saturday's post the surprise package from little Miss  
Lee. As though having read my mail, Natalie mentioned  
today when she called that I really needed a new typewriter and lo! there  
it was but I shall not be getting the machine "threaded up" for  
perhaps another day or two, what with everybody so busy. As  
for the other two items in the package, I really was  
curious to know their contents and so, when returning to Yucca  
from the Post Office, I told myself it would be impossible for me to wait for a secretary to discover  
the nature of the glass jars and accordingly removed the  
top from one of them, after having squinted through the glass,  
still insufficiently imaginative to guess what they contained  
although it was obvious from the coloring that they were  
identical. I still am amazed at my inability to guess about such  
things and accordingly was at once surprised and en-  
chanted when I inhaled the aroma and messrs. Cross and  
Blackwell's finest quince jelly. The dinner hour was approaching  
but that did nothing to restrain me from hunting up a  
slice of bread and sampling the fine sweet right then  
and there. Needless to say I repeated the performance  
as a 10 o'clock snack last night, went back for more this morning  
for breakfast and shall indulge myself again tonight before  
folding up my beard. I have had one of the jars  
here on my desk all day in order that I might pick it up every  
once in a while and hold it to the window just to enjoy the lovely  
coloring, giggling to myself while contemplating it as I recalled the  
epithaph on the south Louisiana tombstone that  
used to make Miss Cam giggle whenever she mentioned it, the  
line being on a tombstone that read:

"She made a man happy".

I recall an identical one on a man's headstone  
but in another region so it must have been a standard start of thing in  
the ante bellum period, and now to think it is repeated in an  
equally appropriate in another type of employment.



38881

15867

On Friday night I was so busy chattering about other things I did not get around to mention that James dropped in on Friday afternoon bearing me some strawberry ice cream and a couple of sacks for the boys, sacks of cat food, that is. He said he realized when Kay was in Schumpert Hospital, that she would need attention for some time on her return home. Feeling that 406 would be inconvenient for them plus Mrs. Crabtree, and that 209 South would be just right, he phoned Mrs. Crabtree at the hospital, suggesting that he move everything from 406 and have everything ship-shape by the time the ladies returned and that the matter might be mentioned at anytime circumstances seemed best to do so. Mrs. Crabtree thought so too and James immediately set things in motion, giving all his lovely books to the Parish Library and lots of things to various servants connected with the three establishments. After that he immediately advertised 406 for sale. After supper Kay called me, --I forget if I mentioned that or not, and invited me to dine with them on Christmas and I accepted.

Mrs. Eakin called me Saturday evening and was apalled to learn I had never received a copy of the 1st issue of the Louisiana Heritage Quarterly. She said she felt that the Association and especially Mr. Mott had been having too many irons in the fire for it seems he has been bringing out some books, --text books, -- that Edwin Davis of L. S. U. had cooked up and that the latter had not gone so swiftly as Mr. Mott had expected. She told me also that Heritage had re-issued some more of the discs, --A Visit to Melrose

This morning it occurred to me I might take a double slap at Heritage by writing a column about the 1st issue of the Quarterly and in the same piece explain that I had not seen a copy of the merchandise about which I was writing and the reason why and did so just as Natalie was calling me to do a column about New Year's Eve which she had had for some days. She asked me how I liked the new publication and I had to confess I hadn't seen one and she, in turn was amazed, for she said so many people had spoke about it to her. You wouldn't suppose there could be so much racket about nothing. She also mentioned that she had seen the merchant-planter and spouse at a party the other night and that the merchant-planter had told her he would like to know what she thought about his intention to "do" the Scandinavian countries right after Christmas. She told him she thought nobody could get around much in winter but he said he thought he could.

This afternoon the folks across the fence went to Many and so I was alone when Sister appeared out of the blue. She had driven her car to Natchitoches, having some gentleman friend drive his car behind her to pick her up when she left it to be worked on in town and take her back to Shreveport. She will return Tuesday to pick it up. --So turneth the weekend and may the snow be melting away in Lyme.....

15868

38881

Monday, December 16th, 1968.

Memorandum:

Fair and 28 this morning but by afternoon there was a warming breeze that soon developed clouds and tonight it is even cloudier and it appears it will not be freezing tonight.

The avalanche started off in good earnest for the week with the arrival of today's post. I didn't open but a few envelopes, contenting myself to secure addresses from the envelopes I opened and shall leave unopened most of the Christmas cards until later in the week when I can the more readily secure the addresses as I get around to read the contents -- if any -- other than the names.

From Mrs. Eakin I received a copy of the Heritage. I had thought to mail it immediately but then decided against doing so until later when the mails are less freighted with Christmas tonnage. Primarily, however, I was thinking of little Miss Lee, realizing as I did that she undoubtedly be having enough irons in the fire as between now and the height of the holiday season so that she could scarcely be wanting any secondary stuff to clutter up things.

Besides, the publication strikes me as of no great piece of business. What was it the Italian had to say to Henry Adams about the American capital?

"The trouble with Washington is that it has no grandessa".

I shall get an extra copy to send along with this one if you to send one along to auntie if you care to although I doubt if it would be of any particular interest to her.

My guess is that nobody in Heritage knows anything about business, layout or reader appeal and are so busy frittering away their time and funds in harum-scarum things that they are cooking up indifferent dinners with ingredients of marvelous potentials which is a great pity and probably explains the absence of grandessa".



88821

15869

In yesterday's memo, I think I mentioned that Sister blew in on Sunday afternoon. I got a kick out of one thing she had to tell me, to wit, that the artichokes she requested on a Thursday or was it a Wednesday a few weeks back, with statement that she would be here on Friday to take with her, were no good. I don't know how long it was following her failure to appear on the appointed date that the artichokes remained in the ice box awaiting her pleasure. Well, according to her, she only discovered when she finally did get around, weeks later, to take them home and go to work on them, that artichokes cannot be pickled if they have once been removed for more than a day or two from the good earth and so that whole episode was "love's labor lost".

But there's no great loss of raw artichokes without some small gain for both J. H. and me since neither of us care about them although in pursuance of some notion that neither of us can alter, Sister a long time ago got the mistaken idea that he and I are crazy about them and therefore continues loading us up with them every year along about this season.

I was glad to get most of the banana stalks felled and hauled away this afternoon for the recent freeze had lessened their sturdiness and it was obvious that another blast of frigid air might send them toppling into mush, making their removal definitely on the difficult side.

I had anticipated having a crew of workmen bright and early this morning but the weekend, as so many weekends, left many of the individual field hands in precarious condition, not unlike the situation of the banana plants,-- unmistakably shaken. It didn't require any particular circumstances to get the gentlemen in a wavering condition but when a car, going a hundred miles an hour, struck Cousin Lug's porker, killing it, the perfect excuse for a hog dressing was in order and everybody got busy scalding and butchering the aforesaid animal and staying off the cold by liberal resorts to the bottle.

But everybody was able to stand upright by this noon and so the slashing down of banana stalks and hauling them away became the order of the afternoon if not the day and now Ucca appears to be so terribly exposed to the world.....

15870

15870

Tuesday, December 17th, 1968.

"...to the ... .."

le Memoirandum: mit mit lio tnd yile; yro lio sau ti  
ten had ... ..  
ed thgim ... ..  
le neid ... ..  
ribben from little Miss Lee's true hand had already been  
"threaded up".

vine ten ... ..  
sengood eain ... ..  
but have already made an envelope for this memo. Accord-  
bun ... ..  
track on its initial run, the abrupt silence on-  
L ... ..  
Missy ... ..  
bif ... ..  
this afternoon, what with the Shreveport promise on Sunday  
that there would be a visitation today, J. H.  
yid ... ..  
survived he may have been "detained" in town to off-  
comment the visitation down here by his sister. But that is  
only an inference on my part that came later on ... ..  
ground I ... ..  
dit yin ... ..

About 2:30 I heard a lady's voice calling to me just  
inside the avant-cour gate. It was the wife of Horace Rand  
who had come to "tell me that Blythe was sitting in  
the car at the front gate, hoping to catch a glimpse of me.  
She realized her wish, needless to say, and I thought she  
looked alright and could readily understand that the  
distance from the gate to Yucca might be a little  
lengthy for one who hadn't had much exercise for the past  
several months. She embraced me warmly, the second time  
in her life and time that that had happened. Of course  
there was much Christmas packages, -- fruit, cigarettes, wine,  
gateaux, and ... ..  
quiteed ... ..  
gaithe ... ..  
in the car when ... ..  
at ... ..  
at it was ... ..  
yid ... ..  
been playthings at your ... ..  
lil ... ..  
.....



15871

Civil War, as a matter of fact."

It was all very jelly but all the time in the back of my mind was the thought that if the merchant-planter had not seen his sister in town, it was certainly time for her to appear on the scene at any moment. Blythe asked me if I might be expecting someone as I occasionally glanced in the direction of the store but, naturally, I lied and said I was not.

Blythe said she hoped to see J. H., not only because it had been a long time since she had but also because she had a gift for him in the form of a fruit cake. And no sooner had she said so that J. H. came out of the store and headed in our direction. We all chatted another 5 or 10 minutes and then they took off in their car for Mantree. I hope they encountered nobody along the road and as for myself, I never did see Sister at all so I assume she perhaps did not come down at all.

The in-coming mail continues rather heavy, mostly Christmas cards  
course, a few letters and an assortment of packages. I  
am so glad I am receiving quite a lot of candy for it  
affords me an opportunity to get noble by sharing it with  
my plantation friends while my primary purpose is trying  
to avoid falling away to a ten, reserving for myself only the  
delectables of which I, myself, happen to be  
incapable of resisting.

The Brookes seem to be "all set" for food at the moment for yesterday their BatenRuge brother sent them a ham, some of bacon and such like while Carmen's sister, Essell took a chance on and won a turkey while to ay Carmen was advised some new store opening in town, Brookes's, or some such name had phoned to say that Carmen had won a ten dollar basket of groceries. Lightning could strike twice in the same netage, it would seem.

I found it odd that I heard two errors on the same topic made on the same day by both H. B. G. and C.B.S. In a national hookup early this morning, HBG mentioned the Nixon-Eisenhower wedding that is to take place this coming Sunday, in New York, and CBH mentioned the same wedding that is to take place in New York Sunday. I thought New Hampton, Mass., was to be the place of the nuptials by Tim "dingle" behind in my Republican social events and so, I suppose it is quite possible the plans may have been changed. Even as Will Rogers, "All I know is what I read in the papers".....

12853

Wednesday, December 18th, 1968.

[illegible]

**Memoandum:** to Berger and Joe June 1  
at 6000 ft. at night. I am still happy  
to cloudy with occasional rain showers.  
The thermometer in the 60's with a breeze  
a cold vent tonight and tomorrow high in  
40's. get ready and have fine rest all

regard ed him I said The calendar, of course, says that Christmas comes on the 25th this year but so far as I am concerned, it came today on the 18th regardless.

Thank you for expert packing, it was boxed perfectly. The outside decorative paper of the all over pattern is lovely and the inner wrapping the scattered "flowers of the field" is equally so. I like the gift itself. I don't have to tell you anything.

about it since you have scanned it on my behalf,  
inserting slips of paper here and there to draw  
my attention to special points.

I must say the subject came as a complete surprise when I had heard nothing about this item being contemplated by La Miferre and who in the world would have supposed that having already done a conventional biography on this anti-alien person she should have gone ahead and done another of Madame de Pompadour in as grand a manner as her Sun King.

So that is the reason she was staying on the rue d'Artois at Versailles earlier this year. I am going to keep this treasure in my desk drawer, sharing it with no one and using the lovely word as a book mark for my own use exclusively, to indicate where, from one sitting to the next, I am the more happily indicate to myself where I had to leave the



15873

15873

happy employment when called away to concentrate on other matters.

I must say the reproductions were a joy and an education, all wrapped into one. I scarcely have to say that I am impatient to see the original portraits and scenes and to absorb all the details and to see the printed words and I want to pursue the latter only when the proper reader is available.

With regard to the reproductions, without saying of course, that I shall be eager to see the original portraits and scenes and to absorb all the details and to see the printed words and I want to pursue the latter only when the proper reader is available. I have read in their own words how her enemies admitted she was indeed beautiful. Obviously she was a person of that element, generally for that reason in any standardized fashion. It was agreed by all her contemporaries that she was above average in height and yet even in the full length portraits she succeeded in conveying that impression. As somebody has remarked, it was remarkable how she and the Sun King were both so enthusiastic about building and cultivating the Arts that it is perhaps lucky they were not joined together in a marriage. Alas, with such a happy holiday season for her, who has only little Miss Lee to thank for it.....

15874

15874

Thursday, December 19th, 1968.

Memorandum  
I must say the reproductions were a joy and an education, all wrapped into one. I scarcely have to say that I am impatient to see the original portraits and scenes and to absorb all the details and to see the printed words and I want to pursue the latter only when the proper reader is available. I have read in their own words how her enemies admitted she was indeed beautiful. Obviously she was a person of that element, generally for that reason in any standardized fashion. It was agreed by all her contemporaries that she was above average in height and yet even in the full length portraits she succeeded in conveying that impression. As somebody has remarked, it was remarkable how she and the Sun King were both so enthusiastic about building and cultivating the Arts that it is perhaps lucky they were not joined together in a marriage. Alas, with such a happy holiday season for her, who has only little Miss Lee to thank for it.....



15875

15875

15875

The major networks are giving lots of pre-blastoff space on the air to the preparations being made for Saturday morning and the attempt to encircle the moon. I was interested to learn today from Dr. and Mrs. Knipmeyer and wife that Jack, their son who lives in New Orleans, is among the 16 men from the Crescent City who have been invited with their wives, to fly over to Florida for the event. They will head out for the doings tomorrow, returning to Louisiana on Sunday. I believe Jack in the past or perhaps at present, is having something to do with some of the operations involved in all this business all though it is their son, Bob, now living in Dayton, Ohio, who used to have as much business at blast-off time at Cape Kennedy, Bob being with R. C. A. I don't know with what agency or corporation Jack is connected. I thought it interesting that in Jack's group, there are some who are invited to accompany the husbands.

James 'phoned this afternoon. He said everything was going along alright at 709 South. He asked if Doratha was on the job yet. I took this to mean he might be dreaming of breaking bread down this way, something he would not think of doing if the lady across the fence is still burdened by the clerk and me. He said he had had a note from Bob and asked if I had. I confessed having received a note in today's post, suggesting that James and I come over for an autographing party, etc. etc. Poor Bob, who is undertaking a difficult job in trying to lure one of us from our accustomed haunts and trying to attempt, not one but two, is nothing short of heroic unless it be his foolhardy. I told James about my lamp, it is one of two he has given me in recent years, asking if he had heard to know an electrician in town capable of handling such an unusual one. He said he would have to see what was wrong with it before giving an opinion, but he thought there was a possibility he himself might be able to tinkered with it a bit. From this, I take it that he will be coming down, dinner or no dinner.

Miss Jones of New Orleans in a recent note asked if I had received a copy of the New Orleans magazine, carrying the article about Clementine Hunter. I mentioned it in conversation with some passer-by today, who reported having seen the issue and found it laugh and good. He promised to procure a copy for me and when it comes to hand, shall pass it along in the direction of Lums. The weather man, a little vaguely suggested that the weather in the Lums area is on the stormy side. I held the thought little Miss Lee doesn't have to be out in it.....

15876

15876

Friday, December 20th, 1968.

Memorandum: 50-ish and cloudy with feeble attempts at sporadic sunshine this morning to ask if she and Thelma might drop in this afternoon to bring a gift from or on behalf of the Hysterical Ladies. They turned out to be a radio of some known make which is very nice. It was rather amusing how the two girls contended with each other for the right to show me how to the thing should be turned on, how the button or dial for finding the stations should be manipulated, etc., etc. It seemed to afford them so much pleasure in acquainting me with the proper procedure I let them go ahead although in all honesty, I must confess the tuning-in on radio broadcasts is fairly familiar to me after all these years. There is only one thing that could make the machine more perfect and, naturally, I did not mention that point for I can attend to that without the slightest difficulty. As the knobs are circular without any dot to indicate any point at all, I shall drop a bead of wax on the station dial almost anywhere so that I may eventually tell "where I am at", when, after a little practice, I can tell where the drop of wax may be in relation to any station with which I am acquainted so I may readily know which way to turn the dial in order to arrive at such a spot or advance from that "home base", either to right or left, to search out related stations.

Carmen brought me a slab of her home made fruit cake and Thelma brought me a basket of all kinds of fruit, a bottle of Taylor's port, a box of home made cookies, various kinds of cheeses, a shrimp salad, candy, fancy crackers and can't remember what all. We had a nice little chat but not very long for they did not arrive until after 3 o'clock and Carmen had a 4 o'clock appointment with her hairdresser in town. Much of the conversation revolved around the subject of tonight's awards at the Chamber of Commerce dinner and the identity of the 1969 man and woman of the year.

Across the fence at dinner this noon, Celeste, just back from a morning in town announced that the lady doctor would be



15877

honored and on the strength of that announcement succeeded  
in persuading the merchant-planter to agree to  
attend I hope Eleanor Worsley is thus honored for she  
has been deserving it for years.

Naturally, in view of the date, the mails continue fairly heavy. I noticed a package today that looked suspiciously like something from the candy kitchen of Caroline Elizabeth Dornen. I shall use everything in that department unopened until the morning. It is so sweet of Carrie to remember me every year but when I think of her accomplishments in other fields of endeavor, I do wish she would conserve her strength for her sobriety and her bird watching.

Among pieces of old mail, I notice there's a paragon letter from Paris in what I take to be the hand of E. S. Willard and I placed that in the little pile of other envelopes to be left unopened for another day, feeling as I did that it fell into the category of letters with which present secretaris would have to struggle beyond usual effort to wade through. James had mentioned on the phone the other day that Kay had heard from Willard who had reported that Irma anticipated spending Christmas in Germany with her son, daughter and the new grandchild.

A few days later I read a little cartoon in this morning's Look and found the article about the genius in faking masterpieces of the Impressionist. I remember a year or so ago when the radio had something to say about some Texas millionaire named La Jolla or some such. I had been dubbed the possessor of the finest collection of jergeries in the country that anybody had ever heard of. It is indeed, that may be classed as a distinction. This article seems to be tied up with that set of transactions, although apparently the deal was only one of a great many such swindles practiced by the same people. One minor point I found amusing was the fact that the artist was so perfect in bringing forth such marvelous likeness of so many great masters that he had on one occasion misspelled the name of Darius when signing one of the canvases.

And just, even if I'm sick, I'm going to be a busy weekend and week ahead in Lyn  
ed blue ribbon. I'm going to be a happy time regardless. As  
for me, I'm going to be happy with my beautiful book....

15878

[illegible][illegible]

I never did hear from the Chamber of Commerce  
about their requested appointment for the  
Christmas guest speaker at their Sat. day night dinner  
and of course was delighted to avoid that business.  
Mrs. Spinks called my friend Crockett, to see the  
out with me a Merry Christmas and to say she and some  
of her family would be getting over this way before the  
holidays. High respect, old friends. I called  
at her house and we had a very nice talk. I told her  
about the Christmas Eve and returning 24 hours later which sounds  
like a lot of trouble for such a brief visit but I  
suppose she wants to be with her relatives and especially  
her grandchildren. She looked here in the air  
as if she had some packages, I will feed  
stuff, I had some with her the still recuperating, food  
stuff, should be very much in order by only several  
other ladies had not already had the same idea.

.....and the Christmas weeks gets under way.....



15879

And speaking of Bereatha reminds me to mention that on Saturday afternoon, about first dark, her elder daughter was in a car wreck just beyond the Bermuda bridge but was not banged up much, as I understand it but the car, -- Era's, Era being her papa, was considerably battered.

Along about dusk dark, Mr. McKinney, Librarian of North Western, tapped at my door, bearing a box of home made shortening bread and a bottle of wine and we went to work on the latter for a pleasant session. I had not seen him in over a year or perhaps since just a year ago since he said he and his wife had recalled that I was fond of shortening bread and that they had baked accordingly.

He called Natalie this afternoon to inquire about some questions in the morning of which I was uncertain. I was obliged to learn she is feeling alright in spite of much holiday feasting with her husband and associates, -- at seasonal and semi-regular gatherings in spite of the demands of family visitations, etc., etc. She asked me if I had time to run through a column she had had for some days and I did have the time. I was told she had gone into the Chamber of Commerce dinner for the sake of lending her presence to the lady-doctor's coronation.

While I think that must have been the fact that Mrs. Sparks remarked that "the children want to come over with them when she and her husband make the trip and she suggested we all dine in town together." I said that would be fine. I think the children are two boys one white and one colored, they are bringing up, about 12 years old. Whether the presence of the colored one will cause any ripple in the Town House remains to be seen. I shall call the owners of the rest, blishment and settle that point. I assume Hatch's store may be catching up with Town's in that bracket by now and, if not, it is high time for an induction. He has been to New York and got well to getting on his feet again. The postal paid for this holiday has already passed by and so the judge from the few pieces of mail arriving. It seems to me there were not more than a dozen pieces for me but my guess may be wrong because it seemed to me the post rider was a little earlier than usual and at this season it may be that earliness in arriving here means that he did not wait for the usual daily mail that usually arrives shortly before his usual time for departure from his main line point of arrivals.

And now for a quick snack and some radio research and thus Christmas week gets under way.....

18821

Monday, December 23rd, 1968.

Memorandum: . . . . .

Clear in the 40's, the sunshine dazzling and even a  
north wind that is bitter. Tonight's low will however  
between 24 and 28 according to the weather man and I am  
prepared to believe it, having already noted that a  
couple of crooks of water hyacinth and  
put together some of the orange plants, Camellias and  
some of the things I planted in the garden and  
some of the things I planted in the garden and  
Some of the Louisville contingents remember a  
contingent came - Lucille Goshen, her sister, Lucille  
sister and the latter's teen age daughter who is going to  
Sophie Hancock who turned out to have quite a few  
both beauty and brains, along with a lady photographer who  
Mildred had rounded up for Tinker Merriam  
Lucile's niece. Mildred herself couldn't  
make it. They brought wine which we sampled and  
relished both for its Taylor port taste and  
also for the banking up of our respective temperatures after  
being out for long in the cold wind. We  
It was after 5 o'clock when they departed and  
an hour later four more parties put in appearance  
all within a few minutes of each other.

I ran through the half dozen cards but did nothing more than glance at the names of senders of packages, opening none of the latter. I have forgotten the names of the senders of some of them although I do recall, and much to my surprise, a box from G. Ramsey, bearing an old letter to request and return address something from Sarah J. Jones of Savannah and I don't remember the names of the other senders. The whole business looked suspiciously like food in the form of letters, and they will all get together in some way and probably turn out to be packages of some kind.

I learned today that my neighbors across the river are going to the James Pratt for Christmas dinner. That seems like good sense since it will eliminate any cause for any unpleasant members of the family from appearing in



15881

vitations to dine here and since my neighbors and the Pratts seem to be crazy about each other's company.

One of the strangest and most delectable confections coming from one of my milite friends is something which is about two thirds cake and one third pie, black chocolate in coloring and taste, and having much grated coconut in it. I never before encountered anything like this and must eventually ask about its ingredients and how it is put together and baked.

I think I shall do a day of reading tonight  
and then fold up fairly early, hope as much may be  
achieved by little Miss Lee.....

15882

Tuesday, December 24th, 1968.  
 I have just returned from a turn in the Chanoy garden  
 where I have been gazing at the waning moon. At 4 o'clock this  
 afternoon the radio mentioned that by midnight, the  
 space ship would be emerging from its present position  
 on the dark side of the moon and heading toward earth.  
 Although my gaze was intent, I must confess I could not  
 discern any rocket, let alone the three gentlemen inside it but  
 then I was a little too early, -4:10 o'clock. Obviously  
 Science will always remember this 1968 Christmas, just  
 making as it does the first time any human being ever encircled  
 earth's only satellite. If the present schedule is concluded  
 according to plans, these three gentlemen should be back on  
 earth a little before the moon itself is full and I am  
 thinking what their sensations may be like as they gaze up at it  
 and ponder on the fact that only a few days before they were  
 whizzing around that remote object. What an age in which  
 we find ourselves living and now if we can go so far  
 in human relations as we have traveled in space, we ought to  
 be approaching Paradise.  
 Today's post continued tapering off. Although I have  
 no doubt the Christmas packages have now all reached their  
 destination. Over three cards have arrived within  
 the past few days from people referring to packages  
 en route, --people like the Sobnide, Dolly Walmsley,  
 these people in San Antonio who never indicate their  
 names and address, etc., etc. I am holding them  
 thought there may be more fruit cakes for me while  
 at least at least for a few days anyway.  
 I trust this machine hasn't been kicking up lately,  
 the ribbon getting stuck and standing still and binding  
 my notice while talking. About half an hour ago I  
 looked mighty faint in places but perhaps she's  
 missed nothing if she cannot.



15883

16901 That with the weather being so fine and lots of people in the big road, I really saw enough people as between daylight and dark. Among others were Natalie and husband, both seeming to be in jolly mood. They brought gifts in the persons of an apple pie which I knew is delicious because I have already sampled, a foam cushion for my desk chair and it works fine, too, for I am trying it right now. And then there was a pretty brown shirt which I haven't tried as yet but shall be looking into it within a few days, especially if this cold spell continues for I believe it is a woezzzz  
weekend garment. And a very handsome hat, such I  
think I have seen before. I am going to send such I should  
say before they departed, the Hankins arrived, and  
Lulu and his wife, George. They both are sweet and added to  
that quality by bringing their cookies and candy and  
a chocolate. And then I thought how much I should like  
to see them. In mentioning the above edibles, I am reminded that  
just before dark, the secretary passed this way to give me  
the addresses. When that had been accomplished, I  
noticed the secretarial gaze was wandering in the direction  
of the little circular tip-top, but at the end of my  
desk where on stood both Natalie's pie, tightly  
covered with foil, and George's cookies and candies,  
also well wrapped. Thinking the pie would be  
about the secretarial's hunger, I asked him if he wouldn't  
relish a slice of same. To my surprise, and I still can  
not accurately believe it, for self-center me, my old pie  
is toothsome, but he really did say that he never  
did crave pie. I inquired about home made fudge and he  
grinned all over and said he really could go for that. Little  
does he imagine how much of just that sort  
of sweetening is stocked in the next room and for how long  
he is going to have to work on it in the days ahead to  
make any threads, on it. But still pleasant--  
right at about seven and a half and it is a good  
thing.  
James 'phoned this morning at seven and  
10, asking if I would like to have him bring down a couple  
of shrimp dinners this noon, that we might attack together  
at Yuca. I told him I had an appointment across the  
fence that wouldn't be readily cancelled. I didn't ex-  
plain further that with the world and his wife flying in and out  
of the place all day on the 24th, an attempt at enjoying  
a private luncheon was unthinkable. Perhaps Ray  
and Mrs. Crabtree had gone out for a little shopping for  
he said he couldn't make it in the afternoon, now that  
it gets dark so early. I must remember that phrase on  
tomorrow and use it to my own advantage. He said  
he would be coming down to pick me up around  
10:30. He spoke of Jallen and said he had received  
'phone order several times from Hatchez.....

15884

Wednesday, December 25th, 1966

Memorandum:

From the hard frost last night, temperature dropped noticeably in the mid 20's. Clear skies this morning until about 11 when scattered clouds appeared, but faded away about 4:30 with the thermometer showing rising into the 50's. It's fair tonight with moderating breezes and it will probably not freeze tonight.

Even as late tonight as tonight I went out to gaze at the moon again but still was unable to catch a glimpse of her. The returning space ship with the three gentlemen aboard. Perhaps the TV will have better luck locating them along about Friday.

There was the usual visitation by field hands this Christmas morning. The majority of the callers began arriving about 8 o'clock around 7 and came in conveniently spaced groups of from 2 to 8 in number until 10:30 when James arrived and we headed into town in a number of cars.

James brought gifts from 2 towns -- a miniature clock tower about a foot several solid colored shirts in brown, gunmetal, gray and blue and a jacket of denim, just right for gardenening. There was also an excellent map of the Hatcher District, perhaps 2 feet by 1 foot, showing even an excellent map of the Hatcher District, perhaps 2 feet by 1 foot, showing even all of Adams County and Concordia Parish across the river and, of course, the town of Hatcher itself.

Arriving at 2009 South Williams, we could inhale old-fashioned aroma of good things cooking. I found Kay had a lot to meet in looking rather better than I had expected and better than I seemed to be. Crabtree was as ebullient as usual and as quick as a flash in taking care of food as always. The Registers and I had a nice long chat, perhaps 2 or 3 hours, when dinner was announced. For the first time I can remember, wine was not served either before dinner or during the meal. I cannot imagine why but perhaps nobody thought of it.

As for the food, it was as excellent as always -- turkey, of course, and a marvelous dressing with lots of tempting fragrances in it and especially the sauce that gave it just the proper zest. There was asparagus pickled sweet peaches a couple of vegetables, etc., etc. A fruit salad with lots of small sprays of lettuce and an excellent dressing, breads which I didn't taste and relishes. The dessert was served in a tall glass with a hollow stem. It



15885

was cold and felt to the tongue like ice cream but the  
eeler was perimmon and the consistency was like a chilled  
custard and was delicious. The coffee that followed was especially  
fragrant. The portions were so generous and I did so much  
chattering that I was constantly behind the others and I enjoy everything  
about it. After a pleasant chat following dinner, I dis-  
covered it was after 4 and when departing, the ladies handed me  
a couple of packages against tonight's hunger. --

Back home a little before 5, I found a Christmas gift from "the Weavers", a bottle of whiskey sitting in its gift wrapping on the bench on the front gallery. James had stopped off for a few minutes and neither he nor I had seen it when he came in but when I returned from the company I showed it to him to the front gate, a passing youth pointed it out to me and I immediately took it and Bill Miller had dropped it in with gifts and decorations. I may employ a local pronunciation, "caloon" there was a pleasant half hour and after I had seen them I hopped, skipped and jumped to provide the furred and feathered friends with their Christmas supper. There seems to be much merriment going on up in the direction of the henry-tank and perhaps I shall have a report from that quarter before I have done a day's work and I called Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and had a good report.

I did not see the folks across the fence today. J. H. was dispensing cheer at the store and Celeste was going to Mass, after which their schedule called for an evening party in town at the J. H. and Claude Williams' home. After that they went to the Jarred Bratts for dinner and tonight they were going to sup sumptuously at Bouffere plantation where Beth is dispensing hospitality in her accustomed lavish scale, I suppose. I suppose there will be a full report on all these activities along about tomorrow.

If I finish my desk work early enough tonight, I am going to open a few Christmas packages although I am in no hurry to do so, especially as I have already opened more than I can say grave-wardens for and what's more, none can approach the delight the first one opened this season produced and I am referring, naturally, to the gorgeous biography of little Miss Ann and the 16th century it gave me.....

15886

Thursday, December 28th, 1966

Memorandum:

Fair with a low of 50 last night and a high of 70, in sharp contrast to Lowell Thomas and his account of temperatures in the Adirondacks where I understood his radio broadcast to say it was 40 below although that scarcely seems possible. I thought a "mister" of fact, that he said 44 below. Perhaps it was only 4 or 14 or 24. Remember the figure may have been 40 rounded off to 40.

Today came the mail, bringing with it something I had to see in the subway advertising pages. To myself I like Back D. "or some such words about gentlemen a underwear. I borrow the phrase and change it to read:

"Next to Madame de Pompadour I like Little Miss Lee, a brownie best"

And so the gift came to hand, so perfectly packed it traveled in fine style and, needless to say, I was enchanted at the sight and taste of the contents such as of the box, just inside my desk and at the sight glance at it, leaving there suddenly, leaving an hour when I shall go a step further and have another go at the contents. In all honesty, I am bound to say there never was anything so good and although I am bound to as feel sorry for Little Miss Lee in having so denied herself such elegance but nevertheless congratulating myself that if she was determined to hold out so capulently in rubbing herself in such superb gauds, I am glad am the one to be the recipient of such riches. Knowing my natural inclination in the direction of brownie phenomena, I can readily imagine myself and doubly enjoy any, starting with Schaeff and running through Quatre Saison that could never hope to compare. Thank you, thank you, thank you and join me, if you please, in holding the thought my best day, not break.

My day has been on the busy side and this morning I caught a brief glimpse of a magazine below



15887

to a friend passing this way. It is that New Orleans publication as mentioned by Judy Jones and I immediately jettied down the address and order a copy for little Miss Lee which I shall send in as soon as it comes to hand. Unlike the Heritage Quarterly, this New Orleans magazine has "graceness", and I use the word after having seen only one picture in the thing, --a portrait, --full page, --of Clementine Hunter, as elegant as the Duchesses of Devonshire or Sarah Delano Roosevelt. I didn't have an opportunity to read the article but if it is half as good as the picture, it is a masterpiece. I had a second today. I inquired after his good health and he said yesterday's troubles were physically tiresome but he was unusually jumpy today and didn't want to do much about little things. She said her feet were killing her but she seemed to be on the point of taking off for somewhere for the afternoon but confided to me that she had been to see the Lester Pricharme house in town yesterday and that I had seemed interested in buying it if the Hunter and Ladies or somebody else doesn't get it. The clerk told me the other day he thought it could be acquired for 30 or 40 thousand dollars and that it could be put in order for an equal sum. Long before Madam Seward's death began telling, I wondered why a town house wasn't acquired and I'm still wondering since possession of a place in town would represent a great convenience for both husband and wife although I do not know if the husband would ever get any more rest there than in the country. I had, at the winter today, the afternoon being especially blessed with unknown lightning, North Dakota, California, Alabama, Texas and so on. Some educational gentlemen from both Louisiana and Texas, negotiating to take a vacation for their families in some college or other in Louisiana, were here. I was interested to do it myself but I couldn't in New Orleans. All my secretaries had given up hopes of ever getting a vacation and my friends had headed for a hand-out. They will be back knocking at my screen door in a moment or two with before the night had advanced much further. The sale of the manuscript is becoming too great for me to resist much longer and so I am going to take one more glance at the two little blue-birds just inside the cover and then stretch my fingers a little further until direct contact is established...

98851

**Memorandum:**

Curious weather with the temperature in the 50's, the sky overcast with mostly thin and seemingly unrelated clouds, some brown, some gray, some white but somehow producing drizzles of not much consequence but with high winds blowing about at a great rate, followed by spells of utter, almost unearthly calms, followed by immense rushing of blasts of tornade proportions with some neighborhoods to the North of us having trees uprooted, roofs blown off and a general helter-skelter all around. It's supposed to fair off tonight, turning cold as it does so.

In spite of all the atmospheric hurly-burly, there was no static on the radio, much to my satisfaction for I had made a point to keep tuned in on the account of these three gentlemen returning from their circumlunar adventures. I staid with the broadcast until the splashdown, the fishing then out of the water and placing them safely on the Yachtour. The boat was about 21:15. At 23:30, after the broadcast came the arrival of the boat about 6:30, I guess, when they touched the ocean somewhere south of Hawaii.

I found the whole business very interesting and naturally rejoiced when the whole 6 days' work came to such a brilliant conclusion.

[illegible]



15889

Friday, December 27th, 1968.

[illegible]

In report of 177, the only information regarding the cause of the explosion is that the explosion occurred in the vicinity of the building. I have no other information regarding the cause of the explosion.

15890

Sunday, December 29th, 1968.

It was freezing this morning at 8:30 when Celeste appeared to say that Mr. Ledbetter of the Chamber of Commerce had been trying to reach me on the phone. He said he had a Mr. Wilson with him, some gentleman with ABC or HNC who has something to do with some TV show, Adventure or Exploration or some such title who wanted to chat with me about the possibility of using this area as a focal point for creating some phase of this program, based on this area. They came as soon as possible and why the appointment had not been made before this late date, I do not know. He asked if I should come immediately and I said they might. He said he would be here in 15 minutes which I said I doubted since it wasn't likely they would make it at the rate of a mile a minute but was at the front gate within 15 minutes and in spite of the fact I kept walking back and forth briskly, I was cold for there was a brief breeze accompanying the freezing temperature. I most certainly should have returned to Yuca after the first three quarters of an hour had elapsed, had not I realized that if and when they did pull in, and finding nobody at the gate, they would undoubtedly have struck out for the house next door and that would have echoed from God knows how long. And as I continued pacing the road, getting colder by the minute but eventually they arrived, not only Messrs. Wilson and Ledbetter but another gentleman from some tourist bureau and a lady from some place, probably scooped up after the conversation with me. I didn't bother to inquire but hurried them along to get the look-see business over and be done with them and that was that.



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15891

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To say I am far behind in answering Christmas mail is putting it mildly. At the same time, I regret to say, Christmas mail, that is cards and gifts, continue coming to hand. Contrary to custom, the clerk failed to send me food from the store before going home, things such as meat pies, milk and canned stuff. He called me from his home in town about 7 o'clock to apologize for his faulty memory. I thanked him for calling but assured him I was glad it had slipped his mind for I am already giving way at the seams with a super-abundance of edibles. Last night I folded up early, taking la Mitford's opus to bed with me. I was turning through the pages again and again. I had such a fine time, I even let the news slip by, regretting it not at all because I know perfectly well no broadcast could serve up anything half so enticing as the illustrations in the Pompadour opus. Every once in a while I get tangled up in a telephonematter of no importance but one that does puzzle me now and then. Frequently New Orleans calls me about a Hunter Canvas, the call from people unknown to me and never the same people. I finally figured that out by asking how they got my quilted number and the person reported getting it from the Times Picayune. Saturday morning there was a call from Hatcher, Mississippi, some bookstore asking me if I would kindly put Mr. Register on the wire. I imagine I suppose the person calling must have been told James and I lived at the same address. Of course the killing part of that transaction was that as of this moment, I am on the cotton over from 406 to 209 South. I don't remember the 209 South number but I was able to advise Hatcher how that was secured from the Watchtower office. Some things turn and some things turn my attention to a dab of mail and then take up the matter of a brownie and a glass of milk and then fold.....

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15892

Monday, December 30th, 1968. edit to gete  
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Memorandum:

The weather man got it wrong when he promised us fair skies for today. What we really got was sprinkles all day as the 1968 rain gauge went passed the 92 inch rainfall mark. It will be interesting to see how much more moisture will be added within the next 24 hours when the rain record for 1968 will be closed. I glanced upon the Shreveport rainfall for the year in tonight's weather report for that area. They have had about 54 inches this year as opposed to the annual average of 45 inches, indicating they are considerably below the 93 odd inches down this way.

I was so happy to find a message from Lyme in today's post. It was so good to catch a glimpse of things as they swirled and some hint as to how the impending holiday would turn. Needless to say, I was sorry to learn about the snow that was falling as the letter was being penned and I do hope it didn't snarl up traffic to make travel that much more difficult. Perhaps, as predicted, it did turn to rain and thus wash away a lot of the white stuff.

It was good to learn about the impending festivities for New Year's and I hope people with such recent recovery from the flu did not venture out prematurely, both for their own sake and for the sake of others expecting to be present.

I was so happy to find little Miss Lee's note but felt so frustrated I had so little time to read it. Two reporters from Town Talk came this afternoon about 2 and were still here when a secretary arrived about 4. There were several pieces of 1st class mail and a couple of packages but I opened nothing but the message from Lyme, leaving the newspaper folks to glance at some printed material in the living room while I absented myself at the African House to run through the only piece of mail that mattered.

When Town Talk called me the other day, I recommended they



15893

*[Faint handwritten notes at the bottom of the page]*

15894

she made the trip without misadventure, and was probably on the road about the time the Eldorado friends were out in the same kind of weather. I don't suppose it is confidential but reference to it might be skipped, — the fact that she mentioned she has just learned she is



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going to have an operation for cataracts sometime in the future. It is bound to be worrisome to contemplate but I trust she will find a measure of comfort in what she probably already knows, to wit, that cataracts constitute one of the most successful operation matters under modern surgery and I shall mention the names of a few people with whom she is acquainted who have come through with flying colors.

Just as the clerk popped in this noon for a quick short before going across the fence with me for dinner, James called and as I had scant opportunity to talk much. He said he had been trying to get a call through to me since Christmas night but without success until that minute. The repair man was here yesterday to examine the instruments across the fence and the contact as between the aforesaid repair man and the hostess resulted in an imposing explosion of sparks. She found him impertinent and I suppose he found her aggravating. As for myself, I think neither of them really got to the fundamental cause of the trouble which I believe is based primarily on the fact that the phone company, trying to get richer all the time, is leading up its party lines with 8 subscribers, the volume per line of which vastly increases the earnings of the company while making the service, except for the youngsters and teen agers, well nigh impossible. Perhaps one reason I have heard from Natalie is a week is because of her inability to reach me although she has two columns we should be running through right now. I have not tried to reach her, however, realizing she and her husband must have many social engagements at this season, not to mention their children being home for the holidays, etc., etc.

I pause to knock wood and hold my breath at the thought that although the bird migration has always been in full swing by December 22nd, they have not as yet put in an appearance, meaning that they will not make it this year in December. I held the thought they may not make it in January of next year either. I must drop Dr. Dorman a letter of inquiry about this matter. Come to think of it, I don't remember Carrie ever having mentioned the blackbird, grackle at all. Perhaps they don't never bravered to spend their winter evenings.

And so good night and the happiest of Happy New Years.